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"Often
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch."

ENOCH ARDEN.

Mezzotint by G. W. H. Ritchie, from painting by W. L. Taylor.

Édition de Luxe

THE WORKS

OF

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Poet Laureate

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. ROLFE, LITT. D.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

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THE WORKS

OF

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

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ENOCH ARDEN

AND OTHER POEMS.

ENOCH ARDEN

AND OTHER POEMS.

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a chasm;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow sands;
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf
In cluster; then a moulder'd church; and higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd mill;
And high in heaven behind it a gray down
With Danish barrows; and a hazel-wood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.
Here on this beach a hundred years ago,
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray, the miller's only son,

And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd
Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats updrawn;
And built their castles of dissolving sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following up
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the cliff:
In this the children play'd at keeping house.
Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,
While Annie still was mistress; but at times
Enoch would hold possession for a week:
'This is my house and this my little wife.'
'Mine too,' said Philip; 'turn and turn about:'
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch stronger-made
Was master: then would Philip, his blue eyes
All flooded with the helpless wrath of tears,
Shriek out, 'I hate you, Enoch,' and at this
The little wife would weep for company,
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,
And say she would be little wife to both.

But when the dawn of rosy childhood past,
And the new warmth of life's ascending sun
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
On that one girl; and Enoch spoke his love,
But Philip loved in silence; and the girl
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to him;
But she loved Enoch; tho' she knew it not,
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set
A purpose evermore before his eyes,
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,
To purchase his own boat, and make a home
For Annie; and so prosper'd that at last
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe
For leagues along that breaker-beaten coast
Than Enoch. Likewise had he served a year
On board a merchantman, and made himself
Full sailor; and he thrice had pluck'd a life
From the dread sweep of the down-streaming seas:
And all men look'd upon him favourably:
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twentieth May
He purchased his own boat, and made a home

For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway up
The narrow street that clamber'd toward the
mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,
The younger people making holiday,
With bag and sack and basket, great and small,
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip stay'd
(His father lying sick and needing him)
An hour behind; but as he climb'd the hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
His large gray eyes and weather-beaten face
All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
That burn'd as on an altar. Philip look'd,
And in their eyes and faces read his doom;
Then, as their faces drew together, groan'd,
And slipt aside, and like a wounded life
Crept down into the hollows of the wood;
There, while the rest were loud in merry-making,
Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and past
Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells,
And merrily ran the years, seven happy years,
Seven happy years of health and competence,
And mutual love and honourable toil;
With children; first a daughter. In him woke,
With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish
To save all earnings to the uttermost,
And give his child a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or hers; a wish renew'd,
When two years after came a boy to be
The rosy idol of her solitudes,
While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
Or often journeying landward; for in truth
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-spoil
In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter gales,
Not only to the market-cross were known,
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And peacock-yew-tree of the lonely Hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

Then came a change, as all things human change.
Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
Open'd a larger haven: thither used
Enoch at times to go by land or sea;
And once when there, and clambering on a mast
In harbour, by mischance he slipt and fell.
A limb was broken when they lifted him;
And while he lay recovering there, his wife
Bore him another son, a sickly one:
Another hand crept too across his trade
Taking her bread and theirs: and on him fell,
Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
And her he loved a beggar: then he pray'd,
'Save them from this, whatever comes to me.'
And while he pray'd, the master of that ship
Enoch had served in, hearing his mischance,
Came, for he knew the man and valued him,
Reporting of his vessel China-bound,

And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he go?
There yet were many weeks before she sail'd,
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch have the place?
And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance appear'd
No graver than as when some little cloud
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
And isles a light in the offing: yet the wife —
When he was gone — the children — what to do?
Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his plans;
To sell the boat — and yet he loved her well —
How many a rough sea had he weather'd in her!
He knew her, as a horseman knows his horse —
And yet to sell her — then with what she brought
Buy goods and stores — set Annie forth in trade
With all that seamen needed or their wives —
So might she keep the house while he was gone.

Should he not trade himself out yonder? go
This voyage more than once? yea, twice or thrice —
As oft as needed — last, returning rich,
Become the master of a larger craft,
With fuller profits lead an easier life,
Have all his pretty young ones educated,
And pass his days in peace among his own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined all;
Then moving homeward came on Annie pale,
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.
Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms;
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his limbs,
Appraised his weight and fondled father-like,
But had no heart to break his purposes
To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring had girt
Her finger, Annie fought against his will:
Yet not with brawling opposition she,
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,

Many a sad kiss by day, by night, renew'd
(Sure that all evil would come out of it)
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared
For her or his dear children, not to go.
He not for his own self caring, but her,
Her and her children, let her plead in vain;
So grieving held his will, and bore it thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-friend,
Bought Annie goods and stores, and set his hand
To fit their little streetward sitting-room
With shelf and corner for the goods and stores.
So all day long till Enoch's last at home,
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and axe,
Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to hear
Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd and rang,
Till this was ended, and his careful hand, —
The space was narrow, — having order'd all
Almost as neat and close as Nature packs
Her blossom or her seedling, paused; and he,
Who needs would work for Annie to the last,
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of farewell
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,
Save as his Annie's, were a laughter to him.
Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery
Where God-in-man is one with man-in-God,
Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes,
Whatever came to him; and then he said:
'Annie, this voyage by the grace of God
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for me,
For I 'll be back, my girl, before you know it;'
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle, 'and he,
This pretty, puny, weakly little one, —
Nay — for I love him all the better for it —
God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees
And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,
And make him merry, when I come home again.
Come, Annie, come, cheer up before I go.'

Him running on thus hopefully she heard,
And almost hoped herself; but when he turn'd
The current of his talk to graver things

In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
On providence and trust in Heaven, she heard,
Heard and not heard him; as the village girl,
Who sets her pitcher underneath the spring,
Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow.

At length she spoke: 'O Enoch, you are wise;
And yet for all your wisdom well know I
That I shall look upon your face no more.'

'Well, then,' said Enoch, 'I shall look on yours.
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here'
(He named the day); 'get you a seaman's glass,
Spy out my face, and laugh at all your fears.'

But when the last of those last moments came:
'Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,
Look to the babes, and till I come again
Keep everything shipshape, for I must go.
And fear no more for me; or if you fear,
Cast all your cares on God; that anchor holds.

Is He not yonder in those uttermost
Parts of the morning? if I flee to these,
Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,
The sea is His: He made it.'

Enoch rose,
Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones;
But for the third, the sickly one, who slept
After a night of feverous wakefulness,
When Annie would have raised him Enoch said,
'Wake him not; let him sleep; how should the child
Remember this?' and kiss'd him in his cot.
But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt
A tiny curl, and gave it: this he kept
Thro' all his future; but now hastily caught
His bundle, waved his hand, and went his way.

She, when the day that Enoch mention'd came,
Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain: perhaps
She could not fix the glass to suit her eye;
Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous;

She saw him not: and while he stood on deck
Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Even to the last dip of the vanishing sail
She watch'd it, and departed weeping for him;
Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as his grave,
Set her sad will no less to chime with his,
But throve not in her trade, not being bred
To barter, nor compensating the want
By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
Nor asking overmuch and taking less,
And still foreboding 'what would Enoch say?'
For more than once, in days of difficulty
And pressure, had she sold her wares for less
Than what she gave in buying what she sold:
She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it; and thus,
Expectant of that news which never came,
Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance,
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born and grew
Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it
With all a mother's care: nevertheless,

Whether her business often call'd her from it,
Or thro' the want of what it needed most,
Or means to pay the voice who best could tell
What most it needed — howsoe'er it was,
After a lingering, — ere she was aware, —
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie buried it,
Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace
(Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her),
Smote him, as having kept aloof so long.
'Surely,' said Philip, 'I may see her now,
May be some little comfort;' therefore went,
Past thro' the solitary room in front,
Paused for a moment at an inner door,
Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
Enter'd; but Annie, seated with her grief,
Fresh from the burial of her little one,
Cared not to look on any human face,
But turn'd her own toward the wall and wept.
Then Philip standing up said falteringly,
'Annie, I came to ask a favour of you.'

"I came to speak to you of what he wish'd."

ENOCH ARDEN.

Photogravure from painting by E. H. Garrett.

He spoke; the passion in her moan'd reply,
'Favour from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am!' half abash'd him; yet unask'd,
His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
He set himself beside her, saying to her:

'I came to speak to you of what he wish'd,
Enoch, your husband: I have ever said
You chose the best among us — a strong man:
For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.
And wherefore did he go this weary way,
And leave you lonely? not to see the world —
For pleasure? — nay, but for the wherewithal
To give his babes a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or yours: that was his wish.
And if he come again, vext will he be
To find the precious morning hours were lost.
And it would vex him even in his grave,
If he could know his babes were running wild
Like colts about the waste. So, Annie, now —
Have we not known each other all our lives?
I do beseech you by the love you bear
Him and his children not to say me nay —

For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
Why then he shall repay me — if you will,
Annie — for I am rich and well-to-do.
Now let me put the boy and girl to school:
This is the favour that I came to ask.'

Then Annie with her brows against the wall
Answer'd, 'I cannot look you in the face;
I seem so foolish and so broken down.
When you came in my sorrow broke me down;
And now I think your kindness breaks me down;
But Enoch lives; that is borne in on me:
He will repay you: money can be repaid;
Not kindness such as yours.'

And Philip ask'd,
'Then you will let me, Annie?'

There she turn'd,
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes upon him,
And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
Then calling down a blessing on his head
Caught at his hand, and wrung it passionately,

And past into the little garth beyond.
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
And bought them needful books, and every-
way,
Like one who does his duty by his own,
Made himself theirs; and tho' for Annie's sake,
Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and fruit,
The late and early roses from his wall,
Or conies from the down, and now and then,
With some pretext of fineness in the meal
To save the offence of charitable, flour
From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's mind:
Scarce could the woman, when he came upon
her,
Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
Light on a broken word to thank him with.
But Philip was her children's all-in-all;

From distant corners of the street they ran
To greet his hearty welcome heartily;
Lords of his house and of his mill were they;
Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with him
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip gain'd
As Enoch lost; for Enoch seem'd to them
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
Down at the far end of an avenue,
Going we know not where: and so ten years,
Since Enoch left his hearth and native land,
Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd
To go with others nutting to the wood,
And Annie would go with them; then they begg'd
For Father Philip (as they call'd him) too:
Him, like the working bee in blossom-dust,
Blanch'd with his mill, they found; and saying to him,
'Come with us, Father Philip,' he denied;

But when the children pluck'd at him to go,
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to their wish,
For was not Annie with them? and they went.

But after scaling half the weary down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, all her force
Fail'd her; and sighing, 'Let me rest,' she said:
So Philip rested with her well-content;
While all the younger ones with jubilant cries
Broke from their elders, and tumultuously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made a plunge
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent or broke
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one dark hour
Here in this wood, when like a wounded life
He crept into the shadow: at last he said,
Lifting his honest forehead, 'Listen, Annie,
How merry they are down yonder in the wood.
Tired, Annie?' for she did not speak a word.

'Tired?' but her face had fallen upon her hands;
At which, as with a kind of anger in him,
'The ship was lost,' he said, 'the ship was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill yourself
And make them orphans quite?' And Annie said,
'I thought not of it: but — I know not why —
Their voices make me feel so solitary.'

Then Philip coming somewhat closer spoke:
'Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long
That, tho' I know not when it first came there,
I know that it will out at last. O Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all chance,
That he who left you ten long years ago
Should still be living; well, then — let me speak:
I grieve to see you poor and wanting help:
I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless — they say that women are so quick —
Perhaps you know what I would have you know —

"Then Philip coming somewhat closer spoke."

ENOCH ARDEN.

Photogravure from painting by E. H. Garrett.

I wish you for my wife. I fain would prove
A father to your children: I do think
They love me as a father: I am sure
That I love them as if they were mine own;
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
That after all these sad uncertain years
We might be still as happy as God grants
To any of his creatures. Think upon it:
For I am well-to-do — no kin, no care,
No burthen, save my care for you and yours:
And we have known each other all our lives,
And I have loved you longer than you know.'

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she spoke:
'You have been as God's good angel in our house.
God bless you for it, God reward you for it,
Philip, with something happier than myself.
Can one love twice? can you be ever loved
As Enoch was? what is it that you ask?'
'I am content,' he answer'd, 'to be loved
A little after Enoch.' 'Oh,' she cried,
Scared as it were, 'dear Philip, wait a while:
If Enoch comes — but Enoch will not come —

Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:
Oh, wait a little!' Philip sadly said,
'Annie, as I have waited all my life
I well may wait a little.' 'Nay,' she cried,
'I am bound: you have my promise — in a year:
Will you not bide your year as I bide mine?'
And Philip answer'd, 'I will bide my year.'

Here both were mute, till Philip glancing up
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day
Pass from the Danish barrow overhead;
Then, fearing night and chill for Annie, rose
And sent his voice beneath him thro' the wood.
Up came the children laden with their spoil;
Then all descended to the port, and there
At Annie's door he paused and gave his hand,
Saying gently, 'Annie, when I spoke to you,
That was your hour of weakness. I was wrong,
I am always bound to you, but you are free.'
Then Annie weeping answer'd, 'I am bound.'

She spoke; and in one moment as it were,
While yet she went about her household ways,

Even as she dwelt upon his latest words,
That he had loved her longer than she knew,
That autumn into autumn flash'd again,
And there he stood once more before her face,
Claiming her promise. 'Is it a year?' she ask'd.
'Yes, if the nuts,' he said, 'be ripe again:
Come out and see.' But she — she put him off —
So much to look to — such a change — a month —
Give her a month — she knew that she was bound —
A month — no more. Then Philip with his eyes
Full of that lifelong hunger, and his voice
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,
'Take your own time, Annie, take your own time.'
And Annie could have wept for pity of him;
And yet she held him on delayingly
With many a scarce-believable excuse,
Trying his truth and his long-sufferance,
Till half-another year had slipt away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
Some thought that Philip did but trifle with her;
Some that she but held off to draw him on;
And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,
As simple folk that knew not their own minds;
And one, in whom all evil fancies clung
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly
Would hint at worse in either. Her own son
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish;
But evermore the daughter prest upon her
To wed the man so dear to all of them
And lift the household out of poverty;
And Philip's rosy face contracting grew
Careworn and wan; and all these things fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly
Pray'd for a sign, 'My Enoch, is he gone?'
Then compass'd round by the blind wall of night
Brook'd not the expectant terror of her heart,

Started from bed, and struck herself a light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text,
'Under the palm-tree.' That was nothing to her:
No meaning there: she closed the Book and slept:
When lo! her Enoch sitting on a height,
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun.
'He is gone,' she thought, 'he is happy, he is singing
Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines
The Sun of Righteousness, and these be palms
Whereof the happy people strowing cried
"Hosanna in the highest!"' Here she woke,
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly to him,
'There is no reason why we should not wed.'
'Then for God's sake,' he answer'd, 'both our sakes,
So you will wed me, let it be at once.'

So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells,
Merrily rang the bells, and they were wed.

But never merrily beat Annie's heart.
A footstep seem'd to fall beside her path,
She knew not whence; a whisper on her ear,
She knew not what; nor loved she to be left
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.
What ail'd her then that, ere she enter'd, often
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,
Fearing to enter: Philip thought he knew:
Such doubts and fears were common to her state,
Being with child: but when her child was born,
Then her new child was as herself renew'd,
Then the new mother came about her heart,
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch? Prosperously sail'd
The ship 'Good Fortune,' tho' at setting forth
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward, shook
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unvext
She slipt across the summer of the world,
Then after a long tumble about the Cape
And frequent interchange of foul and fair,

She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of heaven came continually
And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and bought
Quaint monsters for the market of those times,
A gilded dragon also for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage: at first indeed
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her bows:
Then follow'd calms, and then winds variable,
Then baffling, a long course of them; and last
Storm, such as drove her under moonless heavens
Till hard upon the cry of 'breakers' came
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
But Enoch and two others. Half the night,
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken spars,
These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots;
Nor save for pity was it hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of palm, a hut,
Half hut, half native cavern. So the three,
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-content.
For one, the youngest, hardly more than boy,
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and wreck,
Lay lingering out a five-years' death-in-life.
They could not leave him. After he was gone,
The two remaining found a fallen stem;
And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell
Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone.
In those two deaths he read God's warning 'wait.'

The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,

The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
The lustre of the long convolvuluses
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran
Even to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world,—
All these he saw; but what he fain had seen
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail:
No sail from day to day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;
The blaze upon the waters to the east;
The blaze upon his island overhead;
The blaze upon the waters to the west;

Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise — but no sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch,
So still, the golden lizard on him paused,
A phantom made of many phantoms moved
Before him haunting him, or he himself
Moved haunting people, things, and places, known
Far in a darker isle beyond the line;
The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The peacock-yew-tree and the lonely Hall,
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill
November dawns and dewy-glooming downs,
The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,
And the low moan of leaden-colour'd seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
Tho' faintly, merrily — far and far away —

He heard the pealing of his parish bells;
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up
Shuddering, and when the beauteous hateful isle
Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart
Spoken with That which being everywhere
Lets none who speaks with Him seem all alone,
Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head
The sunny and rainy seasons came and went
Year after year. His hopes to see his own,
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely doom
Came suddenly to an end. Another ship
(She wanted water) blown by baffling winds,
Like the 'Good Fortune,' from her destined course,
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay:
For since the mate had seen at early dawn
Across a break on the mist-wreathen isle
The silent water slipping from the hills,
They sent a crew that landing burst away

In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores
With clamour. Downward from his mountain gorge
Stept the long-hair'd, long-bearded solitary,
Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,
Muttering and mumbling, idiot-like it seem'd,
With inarticulate rage, and making signs
They knew not what: and yet he led the way
To where the rivulets of sweet water ran;
And ever as he mingled with the crew,
And heard them talking, his long-bounden tongue
Was loosen'd, till he made them understand;
Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took aboard:
And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
Scarce-credited at first but more and more,
Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it:
And clothes they gave him and free passage home;
But oft he work'd among the rest and shook
His isolation from him. None of these
Came from his country, or could answer him,

Downward from his mountain gorge
Stept the long-hair'd, long-bearded solitary."

ENOCH ARDEN

Photogravure from painting by E. H. Garrett.

If question'd, aught of what he cared to know.
And dull the voyage was with long delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy; but evermore
His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-breath
Of England, blown across her ghostly wall:
And that same morning officers and men
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him it:
Then moving up the coast they landed him,
Even in that harbour whence he sail'd before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any one,
But homeward — home — what home? had he a home? —
His home, he walk'd. Bright was that afternoon,
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either chasm,
Where either haven open'd on the deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world in gray;
Cut off the length of highway on before,

And left but narrow breadth to left and right
Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.
On the nigh-naked tree the robin piped
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it down:
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom;
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light
Flared on him, and he came upon the place.

Then down the long street having slowly stolen,
His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd the home
Where Annie lived and loved him, and his babes
In those far-off seven happy years were born;
But finding neither light nor murmur there
(A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle) crept
Still downward thinking, 'dead or dead to me!'

Down to the pool and narrow wharf he went,
Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
A front of timber-crost antiquity,
So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,

He thought it must have gone; but he was gone
Who kept it; and his widow Miriam Lane,
With daily-dwindling profits held the house;
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Stiller, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garrulous,
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the port,
Not knowing — Enoch was so brown, so bow'd,
So broken — all the story of his house:
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
Her slow consent and marriage, and the birth
Of Philip's child: and o'er his countenance
No shadow past, nor motion: any one,
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale
Less than the teller: only when she closed,
'Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost,'
He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
Repeated muttering, 'cast away and lost;'
Again in deeper inward whispers, 'lost!'

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face again:
'If I might look on her sweet face again,
And know that she is happy.' So the thought
Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him forth,
At evening when the dull November day
Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.
There he sat down gazing on all below;
There did a thousand memories roll upon him,
Unspeakable for sadness. By and by
The ruddy square of comfortable light,
Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,
Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures
The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,
The latest house to landward; but behind,
With one small gate that open'd on the waste,
Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd:
And in it throve an ancient evergreen,
A yew-tree, and all round it ran a walk
Of shingle, and a walk divided it:
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole
Up by the wall, behind the yew; and thence

That which he better might have shunn'd, if griefs
Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board
Sparkled and shone; so genial was the hearth:
And on the right hand of the hearth he saw
Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees;
And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,
A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted hand
Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy arms,
Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they laugh'd;
And on the left hand of the hearth he saw
The mother glancing often toward her babe,
But turning now and then to speak with him,
Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,
And saying that which pleased him, for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life beheld
His wife his wife no more, and saw the babe
Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,

And all the warmth, the peace, the happiness,
And his own children tall and beautiful,
And him, that other, reigning in his place,
Lord of his rights and of his children's love, —
Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him all,
Because things seen are mightier than things heard,
Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch, and fear'd
To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,
Which in one moment, like the blast of doom,
Would shatter all the happiness of the hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,
And feeling all along the garden-wall,
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,
Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed,
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that his knees
Were feeble, so that falling prone he dug
His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd:

'Too hard to bear! why did they take me
thence?
O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou
That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer! aid me, give me strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.
Help me not to break in upon her peace.
My children too! must I not speak to these?
They know me not. I should betray myself.
Never! No father's kiss for me — the girl
So like her mother, and the boy, my son.'

There speech and thought and nature fail'd
a little,
And he lay tranced; but when he rose and paced
Back toward his solitary home again,
All down the long and narrow street he went
Beating it in upon his weary brain,
As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
'Not to tell her, never to let her know.'

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore

Prayer from a living source within the will,
And beating up thro' all the bitter world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
Kept him a living soul. 'This miller's wife,'
He said to Miriam, 'that you spoke about,
Has she no fear that her first husband lives?'
'Ay, ay, poor soul,' said Miriam, 'fear enow!
If you could tell her you had seen him dead,
Why, that would be her comfort;' and he thought,
'After the Lord has call'd me she shall know,
I wait His time;' and Enoch set himself,
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd
At lading and unlading the tall barks
That brought the stinted commerce of those days;
Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself:
Yet since he did but labour for himself,
Work without hope, there was not life in it
Whereby the man could live; and as the year
Roll'd itself round again to meet the day

When Enoch had return'd, a languor came
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually
Weakening the man, till he could do no more,
But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.
And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.
For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall
The boat that bears the hope of life approach
To save the life despair'd of, than he saw
Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope
On Enoch thinking, 'after I am gone,
Then may she learn I loved her to the last.'
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said,
'Woman, I have a secret — only swear,
Before I tell you — swear upon the book
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.'
'Dead,' clamour'd the good woman, 'hear him talk!
I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round.'
'Swear,' added Enoch sternly, 'on the book;'
And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.

Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,
'Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?'
'Know him?' she said, 'I knew him far away.
Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street;
Held his head high, and cared for no man, he.'
Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her:
'His head is low, and no man cares for him.
I think I have not three days more to live;
I am the man.' At which the woman gave
A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry:
'You Arden, you! nay, — sure he was a foot
Higher than you be.' Enoch said again:
'My God has bow'd me down to what I am;
My grief and solitude have broken me;
Nevertheless, know you that I am he
Who married — but that name has twice been
changed —
I married her who married Philip Ray.
Sit, listen.' Then he told her of his voyage,
His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly

To rush abroad all round the little haven,
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;
But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,
Saying only, 'See your bairns before you go!
Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden,' and arose
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung
A moment on her words, but then replied:

'Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
But let me hold my purpose till I die.
Sit down again; mark me and understand,
While I have power to speak. I charge you now,
When you shall see her, tell her that I died
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her;
Save for the bar between us, loving her
As when she laid her head beside my own.
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
So like her mother, that my latest breath
Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.
And tell my son that I died blessing him.
And say to Philip that I blest him too;
He never meant us anything but good.
But if my children care to see me dead,

Who hardly knew me living, let them come,
I am their father; but she must not come,
For my dead face would vex her after-life.
And now there is but one of all my blood
Who will embrace me in the world-to-be:
This hair is his: she cut it off and gave it,
And I have borne it with me all these years,
And thought to bear it with me to my grave;
But now my mind is changed, for I shall see
him,
My babe in bliss: wherefore when I am gone,
Take, give her this, for it may comfort her:
It will moreover be a token to her
That I am he.'

He ceased; and Miriam Lane
Made such a voluble answer promising all,
That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her
Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
She promised.

Then the third night after this,
While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,
And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,
There came so loud a calling of the sea

That all the houses in the haven rang.
He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad,
Crying with a loud voice, 'A sail! a sail!
I am saved;' and so fell back and spoke no
more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

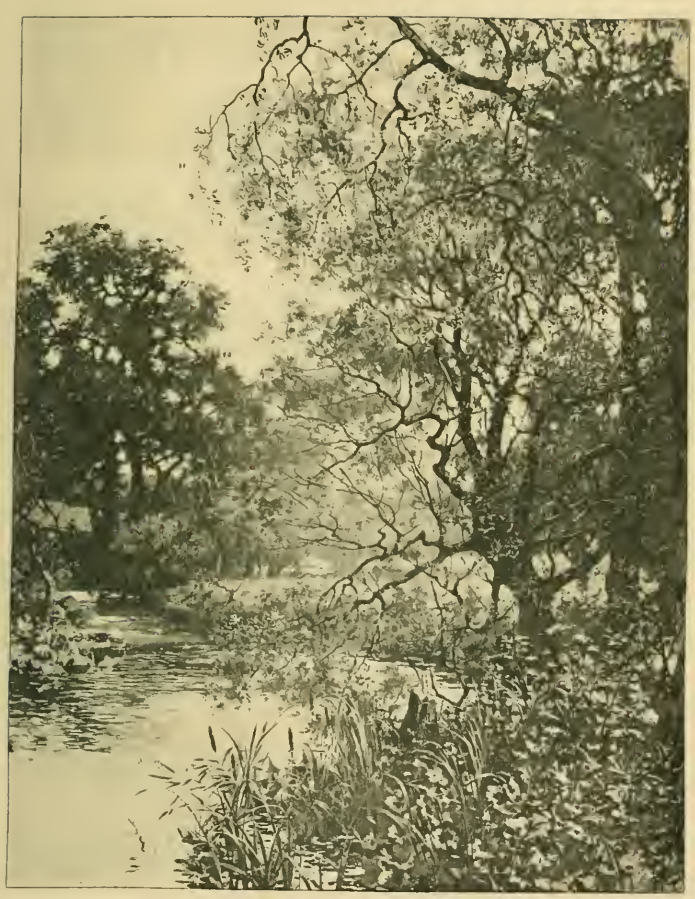
THE BROOK.

'HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to the East
And he for Italy — too late — too late:
One whom the strong sons of the world despise;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
And mellow metres more than cent for cent;
Nor could he understand how money breeds,
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
Oh, had he lived! In our schoolbooks we say
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he loved,
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
Or even the sweet half-English Neilgherry air,
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,

"When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he loved."

THE BROOK.

Photogravure from painting by W. Hamilton Gibson.



Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy
To me that loved him; for "O brook," he says,
"O babbling brook," says Edmund in his rhyme,
"Whence come you?" and the brook — why
not? — replies:

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river
meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
  By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
  With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird;
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
  With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
  And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
  Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery water-break
  Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one child!
A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back — the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry — crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
Stuck; and he clamour'd from a casement, "Run,"
To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
"Run, Katie!" Katie never ran: she moved

To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

'What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philanthropies,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

'She told me. She and James had quarrell'd. Why?
What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd

If James were coming. "Coming every day,"
She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;
And James departed vext with him and her."
How could I help her? "Would I — was it wrong?"
(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
"Oh, would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!"
And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his machines;
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs;

He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-
hens;
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:
Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took
Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming
each,
And naming those, his friends, for whom they
were:
Then crost the common into Darnley chase
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said,
"That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire."
And there he told a long, long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,
And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd,
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He gave them line: and five days after that
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,

Who then and there had offer'd something more,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price;
He gave them line: and how by chance at last
(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,
And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as long

As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,
Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content
Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
  I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
  That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
  Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
  Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
  In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
  I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on forever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these are gone,
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome

Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
I scraped the lichen from it: Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in April-autumns. All are
gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low
breath
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings;
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within:
Then, wondering, ask'd her, 'Are you from the
farm?'

'Yes,' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little: pardon me;
What do they call you?' 'Katie.' 'That were strange.
What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!' 'That is my name.'
'Indeed!' and here he look'd so self-perplext,
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
Then looking at her: 'Too happy, fresh and fair,
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
To be the ghost of one who bore your name
About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie, 'we came back.
We bought the farm we tenanted before.
Am I so like her? so they said on board.
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,

My mother, as it seems you did, the days
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
My brother James is in the harvest-field:
But she — you will be welcome — Oh, come
in!'

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long-buried body of the king,
Found lying with his urns and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes, and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
Sunning himself in a waste field alone —
Old, and a mine of memories — who had served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER, that almighty man,
The county God — in whose capacious hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the family tree

Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate king —
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-gates
And swang besides on many a windy sign —
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his own —
What lovelier of his own had he than her,
His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
As heiress and not heir regretfully?
But 'he that marries her marries her name.'
This fiat somewhat soothed himself and wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Insipid as the queen upon a card;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook!
A sleepy land, where under the same wheel
The same old rut would deepen year by year;
Where almost all the village had one name;
Where Aylmer followed Aylmer at the Hall
And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Thrice over; so that Rectory and Hall,

Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other; tho' to dream
That Love could bind them closer well had made
The hoar hair of the baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his priest
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men,
Daughters of God; so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd it so,
Somewhere beneath his own low range of roofs,
Have also set his many-shielded tree?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage once,
When the red rose was redder than itself,
And York's white rose as red as Lancaster's,
With wounded peace which each had prick'd to death.
'Not proven,' Averill said, or laughingly,
'Some other race of Averills' — proven or no,
What cared he? what, if other or the same?
He lean'd not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft

With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighbourhood,
Would often, in his walks with Edith, claim
A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek; and eager eyes, that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful, beam'd,
Beneath a mane-like mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest when they dwelt on hers,
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore; bounteously made,
And yet so finely, that a troublous touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in a day,
A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the first.
Leolin's first nurse was, five years after, hers:

So much the boy foreran; but when his date
Doubled her own, for want of playmates, he
(Since Averill was a decad and a half
His elder, and their parents underground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite, and roll'd
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
Against the rush of the air in the prone swing,
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, arranged
Her garden, sow'd her name and kept it green
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
Show'd her the fairy footings on the grass,
The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
The petty mare's-tail forest, fairy pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew
What look'd a flight of fairy arrows aim'd
All at one mark, all hitting; make-believes
For Edith and himself: or else he forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon, wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true love
Crown'd after trial; sketches rude and faint,
But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.

And thus together, save for college-times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heaven in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
And more and more, the maiden woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill; there, when first
The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer spears
That soon should wear the garland; there again
When burr and bine were gather'd; lastly there
At Christmas; ever welcome at the Hall,
On whose dull sameness his full tide of youth
Broke with a phosphorescence charming even
My lady; and the baronet yet had laid
No bar between them: dull and self-involved,
Tall and erect, but bending from his height
With half-allowing smiles for all the world,
And mighty courteous in the main — his pride
Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring —
He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walking with her

Than for his old Newfoundland's, when they
ran
To loose him at the stables, for he rose
Two-footed at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third: and how should
Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-met
eyes
Flash into fiery life from nothing, follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of all.

So these young hearts, not knowing that they
loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a bar
Between them, nor by plight or broken ring
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied
By Averill: his, a brother's love, that hung
With wings of brooding shelter o'er her
peace,
Might have been other, save for Leolin's —
Who knows? but so they wander'd, hour by
hour

Gather'd the blossom that re-bloom'd, and drank
The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.
For out beyond her lodges, where the brook
Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran
By sallowy rims, arose the labourers' homes,
A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
That dimpling died into each other, huts
At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
Her art, her hand, her counsel, all had wrought
About them: here was one that, summer-blanch'd,
Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's-joy
In autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden hearth
Broke from a bower of vine and honeysuckle:
One look'd all rose-tree, and another wore
A close-set robe of jasmine sown with stars:
This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
About it; this, a milky-way on earth,
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,
A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;

One, almost to the martin-haunted eaves
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;
Each, its own charm; and Edith's everywhere;
And Edith ever visitant with him,
He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:
For she — so lowly-lovely and so loving,
Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
Of comfort and an open hand of help,
A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs
Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves
To ailing wife or wailing infancy
Or old bedridden palsy, — was adored;
He, loved for her and for himself. A grasp
Having the warmth and muscle of the heart,
A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
Were no false passport to that easy realm,
Where once with Leolin at her side the girl,
Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth

The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,
Heard the good mother softly whisper, 'Bless,
God bless 'em! marriages are made in Heaven.'

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.
My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
With half a score of swarthy faces came.
His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair;
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,
Tho' seeming boastful: so when first he dash'd
Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
Of patron, 'Good! my lady's kinsman! good!'
My lady with her fingers interlock'd,
And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
To listen: unawares they flitted off,
Busying themselves about the flowerage
That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,
The meteor of a splendid season, she,
Once with this kinsman, ah! so long ago,
Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:
But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him

Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life;
Till Leolin, ever watchful of her eye,
Hated him with a momentary hate.
Wife-hunting, as the rumour ran, was he:
I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
His oriental gifts on every one
And most on Edith: like a storm he came,
And shook the house, and like a storm he
went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return
When others had been tested) there was one,
A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd itself
Fine as ice-ferns on January panes
Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,
Nor of what race, the work; but as he told
The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves
He got it; for their captain after fight,
His comrades having fought their last below,
Was climbing up the valley; at whom he shot:
Down from the beetling crag to which he clung
Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,

This dagger with him, which, when now admired
By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
Tost over all her presents petulantly;
And when she show'd the wealthy scabbard, saying,
'Look what a lovely piece of workmanship!'
Slight was his answer, 'Well — I care not for it:'
Then playing with the blade he prick'd his hand,
'A gracious gift to give a lady, this!'
'But would it be more gracious,' ask'd the girl,
'Were I to give this gift of his to one
That is no lady?' 'Gracious? No,' said he.
'Me? — but I cared not for it. Oh, pardon me,
I seem to be ungraciousness itself.'
'Take it,' she added sweetly, 'tho' his gift;
For I am more ungracious even than you,
I care not for it either;' and he said,
'Why, then I love it:' but Sir Aylmer past,
And neither loved nor liked the thing he heard.

The next day came a neighbour. Blues and reds
They talk'd of: blues were sure of it, he thought:
Then of the latest fox — where started — kill'd
In such a bottom: 'Peter had the brush,
My Peter, first:' and did Sir Aylmer know
That great pock-pitten fellow had been caught?
Then made his pleasure echo, hand to hand,
And rolling as it were the substance of it
Between his palms a moment up and down —
'The birds were warm, the birds were warm upon him;
We have him now:' and had Sir Aylmer heard —
Nay, but he must — the land was ringing of it —
This blacksmith border-marriage — one they knew —
Raw from the nursery — who could trust a child?
That cursed France with her egalities!
And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
With nearing chair and lower'd accent) think —
For people talk'd — that it was wholly wise

To let that handsome fellow Averill walk
So freely with his daughter? people talk'd —
The boy might get a notion into him;
The girl might be entangled ere she knew.
Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening spoke:
'The girl and boy, sir, know their differences!'
'Good,' said his friend, 'but watch!' and he,
'Enough,
More than enough, sir! I can guard my own.'
They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the house
Had fallen first, was Edith that same night;
Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough piece
Of early rigid colour, under which
Withdrawing by the counter door to that
Which Leolin open'd, she cast back upon him
A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He, as one
Caught in a burst of unexpected storm,
And pelted with outrageous epithets,
Turning beheld the Powers of the House
On either side the hearth, indignant; her,
Cooling her false cheek with a feather fan,
Him, glaring, by his own stale devil spurr'd,

And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard.
'Ungenerous, dishonourable, base,
Presumptuous! trusted as he was with her,
The sole succeeder to their wealth, their lands,
The last remaining pillar of their house,
The one transmitter of their ancient name,
Their child.' 'Our child!' 'Our heiress!'
'Ours!' for still,
Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came
Her sicklier iteration. Last he said,
'Boy, mark me! for your fortunes are to make.
I swear you shall not make them out of mine.
Now inasmuch as you have practised on her,
Perplext her, made her half forget herself,
Swerve from her duty to herself and us —
Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossible,
Far as we track ourselves — I say that this —
Else I withdraw favour and countenance
From you and yours for ever — shall you do.
Sir, when you see her — but you shall not see
her —
No, you shall write, and not to her, but me:
And you shall say that having spoken with me,
And after look'd into yourself, you find

That you meant nothing — as indeed you know
That you meant nothing. Such a match as this!
Impossible, prodigious!' These were words,
As meted by his measure of himself,
Arguing boundless forbearance: after which,
And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, 'I
So foul a traitor to myself and her!
Never, oh, never!' for about as long
As the wind-hover hangs in balance, paused
Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm within,
Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and crying,
'Boy, should I find you by my doors again,
My men shall lash you from them like a dog;
Hence!' with a sudden execration drove
The footstool from before him, and arose;
So, stammering 'scoundrel' out of teeth that ground
As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old man
Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face
Meet for the reverence of the hearth, but now,

Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd moon,
Vext with unworthy madness, and deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye
That watch'd him, till he heard the ponderous door
Close, crashing with long echoes thro' the land,
Went Leolin; then, his passions all in flood
And masters of his motion, furiously
Down thro' the bright lawns to his brother's ran,
And foam'd away his heart at Averill's ear:
Whom Averill solaced as he might, amazed:
The man was his, had been his father's, friend:
He must have seen, himself had seen it long;
He must have known, himself had known: besides,
He never yet had set his daughter forth
Here in the woman-markets of the west,
Where our Caucasians let themselves be sold.
Some one, he thought, had slander'd Leolin to him.
'Brother, for I have loved you more as son
Than brother, let me tell you: I myself —

What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it?
Jilted I was: I say it for your peace.
Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame
The woman should have borne, humiliated,
I lived for years a stunted sunless life;
Till after our good parents past away
Watching your growth, I seem'd again to grow.
Leolin, I almost sin in envying you:
The very whitest lamb in all my fold
Loves you: I know her: the worst thought she has
Is whiter even than her pretty hand:
She must prove true: for, brother, where two fight
The strongest wins, and truth and love are strength,
And you are happy: let her parents be.'

But Leolin cried out the more upon them —
Insolent, brainless, heartless! heiress, wealth,
Their wealth, their heiress! wealth enough was theirs
For twenty matches. Were he lord of this,
Why, twenty boys and girls should marry on it,

And forty blest ones bless him, and himself
Be wealthy still, ay, wealthier. He believed
This filthy marriage-hindering Mammon made
The harlot of the cities: nature crost
Was mother of the foul adulteries
That saturate soul with body. Name, too! name,
Their ancient name! they *might* be proud; its worth
Was being Edith's. Ah, how pale she had look'd
Darling, to-night! they must have rated her
Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-lords,
These partridge-breeders of a thousand years,
Who had mildew'd in their thousands, doing nothing
Since Egbert — why, the greater their disgrace!
Fall back upon a name! rest, rot in that!
Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler? fools,
With such a vantage-ground for nobleness!
He had known a man, a quintessence of man,
The life of all — who madly loved — and he,

Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,
Had rioted his life out, and made an end.
He would not do it! her sweet face and faith
Held him from that: but he had powers, he knew it:
Back would he to his studies, make a name,
Name, fortune too: the world should ring of him,
To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their graves:
Chancellor, or what is greatest would he be —
'O brother, I am grieved to learn your grief —
Give me my fling, and let me say my say.'

At which, like one that sees his own excess,
And easily forgives it as his own,
He laugh'd; and then was mute; but presently
Wept like a storm: and honest Averill, seeing
How low his brother's mood had fallen, fetch'd
His richest bee's-wing from a binn reserved
For banquets, praised the waning red, and told
The vintage — when *this* Aylmer came of age —
Then drank and past it; till at length the two,
Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again, agreed

That much allowance must be made for men.
After an angry dream this kindlier glow
Faded with morning, but his purpose held.

Yet once by night again the lovers met,
A perilous meeting under the tall pines
That darken'd all the northward of her Hall.
Him, to her meek and modest bosom prest
In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her:
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labour for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. 'Write to me!
They loved me, and because I love their child
They hate me: there is war between us, dear,
Which breaks all bonds but ours; we must remain
Sacred to one another.' So they talk'd,
Poor children, for their comfort: the wind blew;
The rain of heaven, and their own bitter tears,
Tears, and the careless rain of heaven, mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each other
In darkness, and above them roar'd the pine.

So Leolin went; and as we task ourselves
To learn a language known but smatteringly
In phrases here and there at random, toil'd
Mastering the lawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune led,
May beat a pathway out to wealth and fame.
The jests, that flash'd about the pleader's room,
Lightning of the hour, the pun, the scurrilous
tale, —
Old scandals buried now seven decads deep
In other scandals that have lived and died,
And left the living scandal that shall die —
Were dead to him already; bent as he was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong in hopes,
And prodigal of all brain-labour he,
Charier of sleep, and wine, and exercise,
Except when for a breathing-while at eve,
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he ran
Beside the river-bank: and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands of power
Were bloodier, and the according hearts of
men

Seem'd harder too; but the soft river-breeze,
Which fann'd the gardens of that rival rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him breathed
Far purelier in his rushings to and fro,
After his books, to flush his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady's cousin,
Half-sickening of his pension'd afternoon,
Drove in upon the student once or twice,
Ran a Malayan amuck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all mankind,
Answer'd all queries touching those at home
With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,
And fain had haled him out into the world,
And air'd him there: his nearer friend would say,
'Screw not the chord too sharply lest it snap.'
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
From where his worldless heart had kept it warm,
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise:
For heart, I think, help'd head: her letters too,

Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she found
Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till he saw
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued themselves
To sell her, those good parents, for her good.
Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
Might lie within their compass, him they lured
Into their net made pleasant by the baits
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So month by month the noise about their doors,
And distant blaze of those dull banquets, made
The nightly wirer of their innocent hare
Falter before he took it. All in vain.
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
So often, that the folly taking wings
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the wind
With rumour, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,

And laughter to their lords: but those at home,
As hunters round a hunted creature draw
The cordon close and closer toward the death,
Narrow'd her goings out and comings in;
Forbade her first the house of Averill,
Then closed her access to the wealthier farms,
Last from her own home-circle of the poor
They barr'd her: yet she bore it: yet her cheek
Kept colour: wondrous! but, O mystery!
What amulet drew her down to that old oak,
So old, that twenty years before, a part
Falling had let appear the brand of John —
Once grove-like, each huge arm a tree, but now
The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Of touchwood, with a single flourishing spray.
There the manorial lord too curiously
Raking in that millennial touchwood-dust
Found for himself a bitter treasure-trove;
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and read
Writhing a letter from his child, for which
Came at the moment Leolin's emissary,
A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to fly,
But scared with threats of jail and halter gave

To him that fluster'd his poor parish wits
The letter which he brought, and swore besides
To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray'd; and then,
Soul-stricken at their kindness to him, went
Hating his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot dream
The father panting woke, and oft, as dawn
Aroused the black republic on his elms,
Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue brush'd
Thro' the dim meadow toward his treasure-trove,
Seized it, took home, and to my lady, — who made
A downward crescent of her minion mouth,
Listless in all despondence, — read; and tore,
As if the living passion symboll'd there
Were living nerves to feel the rent; and burnt,
Now chafing at his own great self defied,
Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of scorn
In babyisms and dear diminutives

Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
Of such a love as like a chidden child,
After much wailing, hush'd itself at last
Hopeless of answer: then tho' Averill wrote
And bade him with good heart sustain himself —
All would be well — the lover heeded not,
But passionately restless came and went,
And rustling once at night about the place,
There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
Raging return'd: nor was it well for her
Kept to the garden now, and grove of pines,
Watch'd even there; and one was set to watch
The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd them all,
Yet bitterer from his readings: once indeed,
Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride in her,
She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her tenderly,
Not knowing what possess'd him: that one kiss
Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth;
Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
Seem'd hope's returning rose: and then ensued
A Martin's summer of his faded love,
Or ordeal by kindness; after this
He seldom crost his child without a sneer;
The mother flow'd in shallower acrimonies:

Never one kindly smile, one kindly word:
So that the gentle creature shut from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, slowly lost,
Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.
Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
The weakness of a people or a house,
Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or men,
Or almost all that is, hurting the hurt —
Save Christ as we believe him — found the girl
And flung her down upon a couch of fire,
Where careless of the household faces near,
And crying upon the name of Leolin,
She, and with her the race of Aylmer, past.

Star to star vibrates light: may soul to soul
Strike thro' a finer element of her own?
So, — from afar, — touch as at once? or why
That night, that moment, when she named his name,
Did the keen shriek, 'Yes, love, yes, Edith, yes,'
Shrill, till the comrade of his chambers woke,
And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,

With a weird bright eye, sweating and trembling,
His hair as it were crackling into flames,
His body half flung forward in pursuit,
And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a flyer:
Nor knew he wherefore he had made the cry;
And being much befool'd and idioted
By the rough amity of the other, sank
As into sleep again. The second day,
My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
A breaker of the bitter news from home,
Found a dead man, a letter edged with death
Beside him, and the dagger which himself
Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandit's blood:
'From Edith' was engraven on the blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon his death.
And when he came again, his flock believed —
Beholding how the years which are not Time's
Had blasted him — that many thousand days
Were clipt by horror from his term of life.
Yet the sad mother, for the second death
Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness of the first,

And being used to find her pastor texts,
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying him
To speak before the people of her child,
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that day rose:
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded woods
Was all the life of it; for hard on these,
A breathless burthen of low-folded heavens
Stifled and chill'd at once; but every roof
Sent out a listener: many too had known
Edith among the hamlets round, and since
The parents' harshness and the hapless loves
And double death were widely murmur'd, left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced tabernacle,
To hear him; all in mourning these, and those
With blots of it about them, ribbon, glove,
Or kerchief; while the church, — one night, except
For greenish glimmerings thro' the lancets, — made
Still paler the pale head of him, who tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from which

Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labour'd thro'
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the verse, 'Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate!'
But lapsed into so long a pause again
As half amazed, half frighted, all his flock:
Then from his height and loneliness of grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his angry heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the proud,
And all but those who knew the living God —
Eight that were left to make a purer world —
When since had flood, fire, earthquake, thunder, wrought
Such waste and havock as the idolatries,
Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven of Heavens,
And worshipt their own darkness in the Highest?
'Gash thyself, priest, and honour thy brute Baäl,

And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
For with thy worst self hast thou clothed thy God.
Then came a Lord in no wise like to Baäl.
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely now
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine own lusts! —
No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to —
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
And princely halls, and farms, and flowing lawns,
And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him;* for thine
Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair
Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while
The deathless ruler of thy dying house
Is wounded to the death that cannot die;
And tho' thou numberest with the followers
Of One who cried, "Leave all and follow me."
Thee therefore with His light about thy feet,

Thee with His message ringing in thine ears,
Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord from Heaven,
Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
Wonderful, Prince of Peace, the Mighty God,
Count the more base idolater of the two;
Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire
Bodies, but souls — thy children's — thro' the smoke,
The blight of low desires — darkening thine own
To thine own likeness; or if one of these,
Thy better born unhappily from thee,
Should, as by miracle, grow straight and fair —
Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
By those who most have cause to sorrow for her —
Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
Fair as the Angel that said "Hail!" she seem'd,
Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light.
For so mine own was brighten'd: where indeed

The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway? whose
the babe
Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of
shame,
The common care whom no one cared for, leapt
To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
As with the mother he had never known,
In gambols; for her fresh and innocent eyes
Had such a star of morning in their blue,
That all neglected places of the field
Broke into nature's music when they saw her.
Low was her voice, but won mysterious way
Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one
Was all but silence — free of alms her hand —
The hand that robed your cottage-walls with
flowers
Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;
How often placed upon the sick man's brow
Cool'd it, or laid his feverish pillow smooth!
Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
One burthen and she would not lighten it?
One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?

Or when some heat of difference sparkled out,
How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,
And steal you from each other! for she walk'd
Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love
Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee!
And one — of him I was not bid to speak —
Was always with her, whom you also knew.
Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.
And these had been together from the first;
They might have been together till the last.
Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,
May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge: hope with me.
Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame?
Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,
"My house is left unto me desolate."'

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept; but some,
Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those

That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowl'd
At their great lord. He, when it seem'd he saw
No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd
Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,
Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-like,
Erect: but when the preacher's cadence flow'd
Softening thro' all the gentle attributes
Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face,
Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth;
And 'Oh, pray God that he hold up!' she thought,
'Or surely I shall shame myself and him.'

'Nor yours the blame — for who beside your hearths
Can take her place — if echoing me you cry
"Our house is left unto us desolate"?
But thou, O thou that killest, hadst thou known,
O thou that stonest, hadst thou understood
The things belonging to thy peace and ours!
Is there no prophet but the voice that calls

Doom upon kings, or in the waste "Repent"?
Is not our own child on the narrow way,
Who down to those that saunter in the broad
Cries, "Come up hither," as a prophet to us?
Is there no stoning save with flint and rock?
Yes, as the dead we weep for testify —
No desolation but by sword and fire?
Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself
Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss.
Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers,
Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.
But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek,
Exceeding "poor in spirit" — how the words
Have twisted back upon themselves, and mean
Vileness, we are grown so proud — I wish'd my voice
A rushing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifices thro' the world —
Sent like the twelve-divided concubine
To inflame the tribes: but there — out yonder — earth
Lightens from her own central Hell — oh, there
The red fruit of an old idolatry —

The heads of chiefs and princes fall so fast,
They cling together in the ghastly sack —
The land all shambles — naked marriages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-murder'd France,
By shores that darken with the gathering wolf,
Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
Is this a time to madden madness then?
Was this a time for these to flaunt their pride?
May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense as those
Which hid the Holiest from the people's eyes
Ere the great death, shroud this great sin from all!
Doubtless our narrow world must canvass it:
Oh, rather pray for those and pity them,
Who, thro' their own desire accomplish'd, bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the grave —
Who broke the bond which they desired to break,
Which else had link'd their race with times to come —
Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity,

Grossly contriving their dear daughter's good —
Poor souls, and knew not what they did, but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daughter's death!
May not that earthly chastisement suffice?
Have not our love and reverence left them bare?
Will not another take their heritage?
Will there be children's laughter in their hall
For ever and for ever, or one stone
Left on another, or is it a light thing
That I, their guest, their host, their ancient friend,
I made by these the last of all my race,
Must cry to these the last of theirs, as cried
Christ ere His agony to those that swore
Not by the temple but the gold, and made
Their own traditions God, and slew the Lord,
And left their memories a world's curse — "Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate"?'

Ended he had not, but she brook'd no more:
Long since her heart had beat remorselessly,

Her crampt-up sorrow pain'd her, and a sense
Of meanness in her unresisting life.
Then their eyes vext her; for on entering
He had cast the curtains of their seat aside —
Black velvet of the costliest — she herself
Had seen to that: fain had she closed them
now,
Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
Her husband inch by inch, but when she laid,
Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he veil'd
His face with the other, and at once, as falls
A creeper when the prop is broken, fell
The woman shrieking at his feet, and swoon'd.
Then her own people bore along the nave
Her pendent hands, and narrow meagre face
Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty years:
And her the Lord of all the landscape round
Even to its last horizon, and of all
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out
Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle
Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded ways
Stumbling across the market to his death,
Unpitied; for he groped as blind, and seem'd
Always about to fall, grasping the pews

And oaken finials till he touch'd the door;
Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot stood,
Strode from the porch, tall and erect again.

But nevermore did either pass the gate
Save under pall with bearers. In one month,
Thro' weary and yet ever wearier hours,
The childless mother went to seek her child;
And when he felt the silence of his house
About him, and the change and not the change,
And those fixt eyes of painted ancestors
Staring for ever from their gilded walls
On him their last descendant, his own head
Began to droop, to fall; the man became
Imbecile; his one word was 'desolate;'
Dead for two years before his death was he;
But when the second Christmas came, escaped
His keepers, and the silence which he felt,
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom
By wife and child; nor wanted at his end
The dark retinue reverencing death
At golden thresholds; nor from tender hearts,
And those who sorrow'd o'er a vanish'd race,
Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.

Then the great Hall was wholly broken down,
And the broad woodland parcell'd into farms;
And where the two contrived their daughter's good,
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made his run,
The hedgehog underneath the plantain bores,
The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there
Follows the mouse, and all is open field.

SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and bred;
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan child —
One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three years
old:
They, thinking that her clear germander eye
Droopt in the giant-factoried city-gloom,
Came, with a month's leave given them, to the
sea:
For which his gains were dock'd, however
small:
Small were his gains, and hard his work;
besides,
Their slender household fortunes (for the man
Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift,
Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep:
And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
Would darken, as he cursed his credulousness,
And that one unctuous mouth which lured him,
rogue,

"The gentle-hearted wife
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world"

SEA DREAMS.

Etched by Mercier from painting by Edwin A. Abbey.

To buy strange shares in some Peruvian mine.
Now seaward-bound for health they gain'd a coast,
All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning cave,
At close of day; slept, woke, and went the next,
The Sabbath, pious variers from the church,
To chapel; where a heated pulpiteer,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,
Announced the coming doom, and fulminated
Against the Scarlet Woman and her creed;
For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd
'Thus, thus with violence,' even as if he held
The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
Were that great Angel; 'Thus with violence
Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;
Then comes the close.' The gentle-hearted wife
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;
He at his own: but when the wordy storm
Had ended, forth they came and paced the shore,
Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves,
Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce believed

(The soot-flake of so many a summer still
Clung to their fancies) that they saw, the sea.
So now on sand they walk'd, and now on cliff,
Lingering about the thymy promontories,
Till all the sails were darken'd in the west,
And rosed in the east: then homeward and to bed:
Where she, who kept a tender Christian hope,
Haunting a holy text, and still to that
Returning, as the bird returns, at night,
'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,'
Said, 'Love, forgive him:' but he did not speak;
And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
Remembering her dear Lord who died for all,
And musing on the little lives of men,
And how they mar this little by their feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full tide
Rose with ground-swell, which, on the foremost rocks
Touching, upjetted in spirts of wild sea-smoke,
And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell
In vast sea-cataracts — ever and anon

Dead claps of thunder from within the cliffs
Heard thro' the living roar. At this the babe,
Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'd and woke
The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
'A wreck, a wreck!' then turn'd and groaning said:

'Forgive! How many will say, "forgive," and find
A sort of absolution in the sound
To hate a little longer! No; the sin
That neither God nor man can well forgive,
Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
Not first, and third, which are a riper first?
Too ripe, too late! they come too late for use.
Ah, love, there surely lives in man and beast
Something divine to warn them of their foes:
And such a sense, when first I fronted him,
Said, "Trust him not;" but after, when I came
To know him more, I lost it, knew him less;
Fought with what seem'd my own uncharity;
Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;

Made more and more allowance for his talk;
Went further, fool! and trusted him with all,
All my poor scrapings from a dozen years
Of dust and desk-work: there is no such mine,
None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,
Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the sea roars
Ruin: a fearful night!'

'Not fearful; fair,'
Said the good wife, 'if every star in heaven
Can make it fair: you do but hear the tide.
Had you ill dreams?'

'Oh, yes,' he said, 'I dream'd
Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
And I from out the boundless outer deep
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd one
Of those dark caves that run beneath the cliffs.
I thought the motion of the boundless deep
Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved upon it
In darkness: then I saw one lovely star
Larger and larger. "What a world," I thought,
"To live in!" but in moving on I found

Only the landward exit of the cave,
Bright with the sun upon the stream beyond:
And near the light a giant woman sat,
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
A pickaxe in her hand: then out I slipt
Into a land all sun and blossom, trees
As high as heaven, and every bird that sings:
And here the night-light flickering in my eyes
Awoke me.'

'That was then your dream,' she said,
'Not sad, but sweet.'

'So sweet, I lay,' said he,
'And mused upon it, drifting up the stream
In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced
The broken vision; for I dream'd that still
The motion of the great deep bore me on,
And that the woman walk'd upon the brink:
I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her of it:
"It came," she said, "by working in the mines:"
Oh, then to ask her of my shares, I thought;
And ask'd; but not a word; she shook her head.

And then the motion of the current ceased,
And there was rolling thunder; and we reach'd
A mountain, like a wall of burs and thorns;
But she with her strong feet up the steep hill
Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at top
She pointed seaward: there a fleet of glass,
That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
That not one moment ceased to thunder, past
In sunshine: right across its track there lay,
Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad at first
To think that in our often-ransack'd world
Still so much gold was left; and then I fear'd
Lest the gay navy there should splinter on it,
And fearing waved my arm to warn them off;
An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
(I thought I could have died to save it) near'd,
Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and vanish'd,
and I woke,
I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
My dream was Life; the woman honest Work;
And my poor venture but a fleet of glass
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold.'

'Nay,' said the kindly wife to comfort him,
'You raised your arm, you tumbled down and broke
The glass with little Margaret's medicine in it;
And, breaking that, you made and broke your dream:
A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks.'

'No trifle,' groan'd the husband; 'yesterday
I met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd
That which I ask'd the woman in my dream.
Like her, he shook his head. "Show me the books!"
He dodged me with a long and loose account.
"The books, the books!" but he, he could not wait,
Bound on a matter he of life and death:
When the great Books (see Daniel seven and ten)
Were open'd, I should find he meant me well;
And then began to bloat himself, and ooze
All over with the fat affectionate smile
That makes the widow lean. "My dearest friend,

Have faith, have faith! We live by faith," said he;
"And all things work together for the good
Of those" — it makes me sick to quote him — last
Gript my hand hard, and with God-bless-you went.
I stood like one that had received a blow:
I found a hard friend in his loose accounts,
A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,
A curse in his God-bless-you: then my eyes
Pursued him down the street, and far away,
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee.'

'Was he so bound, poor soul?' said the good wife;
'So are we all: but do not call him, love,
Before you prove him, rogue, and proved, forgive.
His gain is loss; for he that wrongs his friend
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears about
A silent court of justice in his breast,

Himself the judge and jury, and himself
The prisoner at the bar, ever condemn'd:
And that drags down his life: then comes what comes
Hereafter: and he meant, he said he meant,
Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you well.'

'"With all his conscience and one eye askew"—
Love, let me quote these lines, that you may learn
A man is likewise counsel for himself,
Too often, in that silent court of yours—
"With all his conscience and one eye askew,
So false, he partly took himself for true;
Whose pious talk, when most his heart was dry,
Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his eye;
Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain,
Made Him his catspaw and the Cross his tool,
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and fool;
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he forged,
And snake-like slimed his victim ere he gorged;
And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest

Arising, did his holy oily best,
Dropping the too rough H in Hell and Heaven,
To spread the Word by which himself had
thriven."
How like you this old satire?'

'Nay,' she said,
'I loathe it: he had never kindly heart,
Nor ever cared to better his own kind,
Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.
But will you hear *my* dream, for I had one
That altogether went to music? Still
It awed me.'

Then she told it, having dream'd
Of that same coast.

— But round the North, a light,
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapour, lay,
And ever in it a low musical note
Swell'd up and died; and, as it swell'd, a ridge
Of breaker issued from the belt, and still
Grew with the growing note, and when the
note

Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on those cliffs
Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that
Living within the belt) whereby she saw
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs no more,
But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
One after one: and then the great ridge drew,
Lessening to the lessening music, back,
And past into the belt and swell'd again
Slowly to music: ever when it broke
The statues, king or saint or founder, fell;
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin left
Came men and women in dark clusters round,
Some crying, 'Set them up! they shall not fall!'
And others, 'Let them lie, for they have fallen.'
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grieved
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find
Their wildest wailings never out of tune
With that sweet note; and ever as their shrieks

Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave
Returning, while none mark'd it, on the crowd
Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd their
eyes
Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept away
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone,
To the waste deeps together.

'Then I fixt
My wistful eyes on two fair images,
Both crown'd with stars and high among the
stars, —
The Virgin Mother standing with her child
High up on one of those dark minster-fronts —
Till she began to totter, and the child
Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I woke,
And my dream awed me: — well — but what are
dreams?
Yours came but from the breaking of a glass,
And mine but from the crying of a child.'

'Child? No!' said he, 'but this tide's roar,
and his,
Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,

And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms
(Altho' I grant but little music there)
Went both to make your dream: but if there were
A music harmonizing our wild cries,
Sphere-music such as that you dream'd about,
Why, that would make our passions far too like
The discords dear to the musician. No —
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns of heaven:
True Devils with no ear, they howl in tune
With nothing but the Devil!'

'"True" indeed!
One of our town, but later by an hour
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on the shore;
While you were running down the sands, and made
The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow flap,
Good man, to please the child. She brought strange news.
Why were you silent when I spoke to-night?
I had set my heart on your forgiving him
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the dead.'

'Dead! who is dead?'

'The man your eye pursued.
A little after you had parted with him,
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease.'

'Dead? he? of heart-disease? what heart had he
To die of? dead!'

'Ah, dearest, if there be
A devil in man, there is an angel too,
And if he did that wrong you charge him with,
His angel broke his heart. But your rough voice
(You spoke so loud) has roused the child again.
Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep
Without her "little birdie"? well, then, sleep,
And I will sing you "birdie."'

Saying this,
The woman half turn'd round from him she loved,
Left him one hand, and reaching thro' the night

Her other, found (for it was close beside)
And half-embraced the basket cradle-head
With one soft arm, which, like the pliant bough
That moving moves the nest and nestling, sway'd
The cradle, while she sang this baby song:

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

'She sleeps: let us too, let all evil, sleep.
He also sleeps — another sleep than ours.
He can do no more wrong: forgive him, dear,
And I shall sleep the sounder!'

Then the man,
'His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to come.
Yet let your sleep for this one night be sound:
I do forgive him!'

'Thanks, my love,' she said,
'Your own will be the sweeter,' and they slept.

LUCRETIUS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
Her master cold; for when the morning flush
Of passion and the first embrace had died
Between them, tho' he loved her none the less,
Yet often when the woman heard his foot
Return from pacings in the field, and ran
To greet him with a kiss, the master took
Small notice, or austerely, for — his mind
Half buried in some weightier argument,
Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter — he past
To turn and ponder those three hundred scrolls
Left by the Teacher, whom he held divine.
She brook'd it not; but wrathful, petulant,
Dreaming some rival, sought and found a witch
Who brew'd the philtre which had power, they said,
To lead an errant passion home again.
And this, at times, she mingled with his drink,

And this destroy'd him; for the wicked broth
Confused the chemic labour of the blood,
And tickling the brute brain within the man's
Made havock among those tender cells, and check'd
His power to shape: he loathed himself; and once
After a tempest woke upon a morn
That mock'd him with returning calm, and cried:

'Storm in the night! for thrice I heard the rain
Rushing; and once the flash of a thunderbolt —
Methought I never saw so fierce a fork —
Struck out the streaming mountain-side, and show'd
A riotous confluence of watercourses
Blanching and billowing in a hollow of it,
Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

'Storm, and what dreams, ye holy Gods, what dreams!
For thrice I waken'd after dreams. Perchance

We do but recollect the dreams that come
Just ere the waking: terrible! for it seem'd
A void was made in Nature; all her bonds
Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-streams
And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruining along the illimitable inane,
Fly on to clash together again, and make
Another and another frame of things
For ever: that was mine, my dream, I knew it —
Of and belonging to me, as the dog
With inward yelp and restless forefoot plies
His function of the woodland: but the next!
I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
Came driving rainlike down again on earth,
And where it dash'd the reddening meadow, sprang
No dragon warriors from Cadmean teeth,
For these I thought my dream would show to me,
But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art,
Hired animalisms, vile as those that made
The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies worse
Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods.

And hands they mixt, and yell'd and round me
drove
In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and saw —
Was it the first beam of my latest day?

'Then, then, from utter gloom stood out the
breasts,
The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a sword
Now over and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down shamed
At all that beauty; and as I stared, a fire,
The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that I woke.

'Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus, thine,
Because I would not one of thine own doves,
Not even a rose, were offer'd to thee? thine,
Forgetful how my rich procemion makes
Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity?

'Deity? nay, thy worshippers. My tongue
Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of these

Angers thee most, or angers thee at all?
Not if thou be'st of those who, far aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and spite and scorn,
Live the great life which all our greatest fain
Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

'Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like ourselves
Touch, and be touch'd, then would I cry to thee
To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender arms
Round him, and keep him from the lust of blood
That makes a steaming slaughter-house of Rome.

'Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant not her,
Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see
Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and tempt
The Trojan, while his neatherds were abroad;
Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter wept
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears;
Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called

Calliope to grace his golden verse —
Ay, and this Kypris also — did I take
That popular name of thine to shadow forth
The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the thick
blood
Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs are glad
Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of flowers:
Which things appear the work of mighty Gods.

'The Gods! and if I go *my* work is left
Unfinish'd — *if* I go. The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to mar
Their sacred everlasting calm! and such,
Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
Not such, nor all unlike it, man may gain
Letting his own life go. The Gods, the Gods!
If all be atoms, how then should the Gods
Being atomic not be dissoluble,

Not follow the great law? My master held
That Gods there are, for all men so believe.
I prest my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless. Meant? I meant?
I have forgotten what I meant: my mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

'Look where another of our Gods, the Sun,
Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion — what you will —
Has mounted yonder; since he never sware,
Except his wrath were wreak'd on wretched man,
That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter; tales! for never yet on earth
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roasting ox
Moan round the spit — nor knows he what he sees;
King of the East altho' he seem, and girt
With song and flame and fragrance, slowly lifts
His golden feet on those empurpled stairs

That climb into the windy halls of heaven:
And here he glances on an eye new-born,
And gets for greeting but a wail of pain;
And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fain would gaze upon him to the last;
And here upon a yellow eyelid fallen
And closed by those who mourn a friend in vain,
Not thankful that his troubles are no more.
And me, altho' his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the post
Allotted by the Gods: but he that holds
The Gods are careless, wherefore need he care
Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at once,
Being troubled, wholly out of sight, and sink
Past earthquake — ay, and gout and stone, that break
Body toward death, and palsy, death-in-life,
And wretched age — and worst disease of all,
These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeakable,
Abominable, strangers at my hearth

Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
The phantom husks of something foully done,
And fleeting thro' the boundless universe,
And blasting the long quiet of my breast
With animal heat and dire insanity?

'How should the mind, except it loved them, clasp
These idols to herself? or do they fly
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the flakes
In a fall of snow, and so press in, perforce
Of multitude, as crowds that in an hour
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
The keepers down, and throng, their rags and they
The basest, far into that council-hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the land?

'Can I not fling this horror off me again,
Seeing with how great ease Nature can smile,
Balmier and nobler from her bath of storm,
At random ravage? and how easily
The mountain there has cast his cloudy slough,
Now towering o'er him in serenest air,

A mountain o'er a mountain, — ay, and within
All hollow as the hopes and fears of men?

'But who was he that in the garden snared
Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
To laugh at — more to laugh at in myself —
For look! what is it? there? yon arbutus
Totters; a noiseless riot underneath
Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops quivering —
The mountain quickens into Nymph and Faun;
And here an Oread — how the sun delights
To glance and shift about her slippery sides,
And rosy knees and supple roundedness,
And budded bosom-peaks — who this way runs
Before the rest — A satyr, a satyr, see,
Follows; but him I proved impossible;
Twy-natured is no nature: yet he draws
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now
Beastlier than any phantom of his kind
That ever butted his rough brother-brute
For lust or lusty blood or provender:
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and she
Loathes him as well; such a precipitate heel,

Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-wing,
Whirls her to me: but will she fling herself
Shameless upon me? Catch her, goat-foot: nay,
Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilderness,
And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide! do I wish —
What? — that the bush were leafless? or to whelm
All of them in one massacre? O ye Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you
From childly wont and ancient use I call —
I thought I lived securely as yourselves —
No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-spite,
No madness of ambition, avarice, none:
No larger feast than under plane or pine
With neighbours laid along the grass, to take
Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy —
Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
But now it seems some unseen monster lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his; and spoils

My bliss in being; and it was not great;
For save when shutting reasons up in rhythm,
Or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
Tired of so much within our little life,
Or of so little in our little life —
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crown'd with a flower or two, and there an end —
And since the nobler pleasure seems to fade,
Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,
Not manlike end myself? — our privilege —
What beast has heart to do it? And what man,
What Roman would be dragg'd in triumph thus?
Not I; not he, who bears one name with her
Whose death-blow struck the dateless doom of kings,
When, brooking not the Tarquin in her veins,
She made her blood in sight of Collatine
And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,
Spout from the maiden fountain in her heart.
And from it sprang the Commonwealth, which breaks
As I am breaking now!

'And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
Those blind beginnings that have made me man,
Dash them anew together at her will
Thro' all her cycles — into man once more,
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower:
But till this cosmic order everywhere
Shatter'd into one earthquake in one day
Cracks all to pieces, — and that hour perhaps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to himself,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes and fanes,
And even his bones long laid within the grave,
The very sides of the grave itself shall pass,
Vanishing, atom and void, atom and void,
Into the unseen for ever, — till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake, and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal hell,
Shall stand: ay, surely: then it fails at last

And perishes as I must; for O Thou,
Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,
Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
Without one pleasure and without one pain,
Howbeit I know thou surely must be mine
Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
How roughly men may woo thee so they win —
Thus — thus: the soul flies out and dies in the air.'

With that he drove the knife into his side:
She heard him raging, heard him fall; ran in,
Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon herself
As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd
That she but meant to win him back, fell on him,
Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd: he answer'd, 'Care not thou!
Thy duty? What is duty? Fare thee well!'

BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS.

BALLADS

AND OTHER POEMS.

TO ALFRED TENNYSON

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

'WAIT a little,' you say, 'you are sure it 'll all
come right,'
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks so
wan an' so white:
Wait! an' once I ha' waited — I had n't to wait
for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry. — No, no,
you are doing me wrong!
Harry and I were married: the boy can hold
up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man
was dead;
I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I work
an' I wait to the end.
I am all alone in the world, an' you are my
only friend.

"The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man was dead."

THE FIRST QUARREL.

Photogravure from painting by W. L. Taylor.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I 'll tell you the tale o' my life.
When Harry an' I were children, he call'd me his own little wife;
I was happy when I was with him, an' sorry when he was away,
An' when we play'd together, I loved him better than play;
He workt me the daisy chain — he made me the cowslip ball,
He fought the boys that were rude, an' I loved him better than all.
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at home in disgrace,
I never could quarrel with Harry — I had but to look in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's kin, that had need
Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent, an' the father agreed;

So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire farm
for years an' for years;
I walked with him down to the quay, poor lad,
an' we parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we heard
them a-ringing the bell,
'I 'll never love any but you, God bless you,
my own little Nell.'

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he came
to harm;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with him
up at the farm,
One had deceived her an' left her alone with
her sin an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry; the girl
was the most to blame.

V.

And years went over till I that was little had
grown so tall
The men would say of the maids, 'Our Nelly 's
the flower of 'em all.'

I did n't take heed o' *them*, but I taught myself all I could
To make a good wife for Harry, when Harry came home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields, 'I 'll never love any but you;'
'I 'll never love any but you,' the morning song of the lark;
'I 'll never love any but you,' the nightingale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he look'd at me sidelong and shy,
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so many years had gone by,
I had grown so handsome and tall — that I might ha' forgot him somehow —
For he thought — there were other lads — he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were married
o' Christmas day,
Married among the red berries, an' all as merry
as May —
Those were the pleasant times, my house an'
my man were my pride,
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-sailing
with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he tried
the villages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see if work
could be found;
An' he wrote: 'I ha' six weeks' work, little
wife, so far as I know;
I 'll come for an hour to morrow, an' kiss you
before I go.'

X.

So I set to righting the house, for was n't he
coming that day?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was push'd in
a corner away,

It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a letter
along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a hor-
nets' nest.

XI.

'Sweetheart,' — this was the letter — this was
the letter I read —
'You promised to find me work near you, an' I
wish I was dead —
Did n't you kiss me an' promise? you have n't
done it, my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away, an' I
wish that I had.'

XII.

I too wish that I had — in the pleasant times
that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry — *my* quarrel —
the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the letter
that drove me wild,
An' he told it me all at once, as simple as any
child,

'What can it matter, my lass, what I did wi'
my single life?
I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to his
wife;
An' *she* was n't one o' the worst.' 'Then,' I
said, 'I 'm none o' the best.'
An' he smiled at me, 'Ain't you, my love?
Come, come, little wife, let it rest!
The man is n't like the woman, no need to make
such a stir.'
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said,
'You were keeping with her,
When I was a-loving you all along an' the same
as before.'
An' he did n't speak for a while, an' he anger'd
me more and more.
Then he patted my hand in his gentle way,
'Let bygones be!'
'Bygones! you kept yours hush'd,' I said,
'when you married me!
By-gones ma' be come-agains; an' *she* — in her
shame an' her sin —
You 'll have her to nurse my child, if I die o'
my lying in!

You 'll make her its second mother! I hate her — an' I hate you!'
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha' beaten me black an' blue
Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when I were so crazy wi' spite,
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come right.'

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I watch'd him, an' when he came in
I felt that my heart was hard, he was all wet thro' to the skin,
An' I never said, 'off wi' the wet,' I never said, 'on wi' the dry,'
So I knew my heart was hard, when he came to bid me good-bye.
'You said that you hated me, Ellen, but that is n't true, you know;
I am going to leave you a bit — you 'll kiss me before I go?'

XV.

'Going! you 're going to her — kiss her — if you will,' I said —
I was near my time wi' the boy, I must ha' been light i' my head —
'I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!' — I did n't know well what I meant,
But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, 'I 've gotten my work to do;
You would n't kiss me, my lass, an' I never loved any but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-night by the boat.'

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he was always kind to me.

'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all
come right' —
An' the boat went down that night — the boat
went down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—.

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea —
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out to me!'
Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drenched with the rain.

III.

Anything fallen again? nay — what was there
left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have number'd the
bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you?* do you
come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree
falls so must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you
— what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet? you never have
spoken a word.
Oh — to pray with me — yes — a lady — none
of their spies —
But the night has crept into my heart, and
begun to darken my eyes.

V.

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, what should
you know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and the bitter
frost and the fright?

I have done it, while you were asleep — you were only made for the day.
I have gather'd my baby together — and now you may go your way.

VI.

Nay — for it 's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.
'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he never has told me a lie.
I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was but a child —
'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said; he was always so wild —
And idle — and could n't be idle — my Willy — he never could rest.
The King should have made him a soldier, he would have been one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they
never would let him be good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and
he swore that he would;
And he took no life, but he took one purse,
and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows — I 'll none of
it, said my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers.
I told them my tale,
God's own truth — but they kill'd him, they
kill'd him for robbing the mail.
They hang'd him in chains for a show — we
had always borne a good name —
To be hang'd for a thief — and then put away
— is n't that enough shame?
Dust to dust — low down — let us hide! but
they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare at
him, passing by.

God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of the air,
But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him and hang'd him there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my last good-bye;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell. 'O mother!' I heard him cry.
I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced me away.

X.

Then since I could n't but hear that cry of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me down on my bed.
'Mother, O mother!' — he call'd in the dark to me year after year —
They beat me for that, they beat me — you know that I could n't but hear;

And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again — but the creatures had worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was left —
I stole them all from the lawyers — and you, will you call it a theft? —
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones that had laughed and had cried —
Theirs? Oh, no! they are mine — not theirs — they had moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all —
I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,
But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up — they would hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? Oh, yes — we are sinners, I know — let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good-will toward men —
'Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord' — let me hear it again;
'Full of compassion and mercy — long-suffering.' Yes, oh, yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder — the Saviour lives but to bless.
He'll never put on the black cap except for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last — I have heard it in church — and the last may be first.
Suffering — oh, long-suffering — yes, as the Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind and the shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his mother? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the sea that 'ill moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation — it 's all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not find him in Hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has look'd into my care,
And He means me I 'm sure to be happy with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul, that is all your desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone to the fire?

I have been with God in the dark — go, go,
you may leave me alone —
You never have borne a child — you are just as
hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you
mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's
voice in the wind —
The snow and the sky so bright — he used but
to call in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church and
not from the gibbet — for hark!
Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is coming
— shaking the walls —
Willy — the moon's in a cloud —— Good-
night. I am going. He calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou mun
a' sights[1] to tell.
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa 'arty an'
well.
'Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a vartical
soon[2] !'
Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäilors
a' seëan an' a' doon;
'Summat to drink — sa 'ot?' I 'a nowt but
Adam's wine:
What 's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to the 'eät
o' the line?

[1] The vowels *aï*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *craïin'*, *daïin'*, *whaï*, *aï* (I), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

[2] The *oo* short, as in 'wood.'

II.

'What 's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer?' I 'll
tell tha. Gin.
But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä fur it
down to the inn.
Naäy — fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha was
iver sa dry,
Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer, an'
I 'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur it?
back-end o' June,
Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well as a fiddle
i' tune:
I could fettle and clump owd booöts and shoes
wi' the best on 'em all,
As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to Harmsby
and Hutterby Hall.
We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an' as 'appy
as 'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn, and then I taäkes
to the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I be hafe shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the Plow, we could sing a good song at the Plow;
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd an' hurted my huck,[1]
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes slaäpe down i' the squad an' the muck:
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor — not hafe ov a man, my lad —
Fur he scrawm'd an' scratted my faäce like a cat, an' it maäde 'er sa mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,[2] an' raäted ma, 'Sottin' thy braäins
Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' hawmin'[3] about i' the laänes,
Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn not touch thy 'at to the Squire;'
An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an' I seeäd 'im a-gittin' o' fire;

[1] Hip. [2] Scold.
[3] Lounging.

But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus as
droonk as a king,
Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite wi'
a brokken string.

V.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälks' cloäths to keep the
wolf fro' the door,
Eh, but the moor she riled me, she druv me to
drink the moor,
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd, wheer
Sally's owd stockin' wur 'id,
An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and I
weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull gotten
loose at a faäir,
An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an' cryin' and
teärin' 'er aäir,
An' I tummled athurt the craädle an' sweär'd as
I 'd breäk ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied our
Sally a kick,

An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an' she an' the babby beäl'd,[1]
Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor a mortal beäst o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd that our Sally went laämed
Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur dreäd-ful ashaämed;
An' Sally wur sloomy[2] an' draggle-taäil'd in an owd turn gown,
An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd, an' the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty an' neät an' sweeät,
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro' 'eäd to feeät:
An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er by Thursby thurn;

[1] Bellowed, cried out.
[2] Sluggish, out of spirits.

Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a Sunday at murn,
Could n't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin' oop 'igher an' 'igher,
An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined like a sparkle o' fire.
'Does n't tha see 'im,' she axes, 'fur I can see 'im?' an' I
Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as danced in 'er pratty blue eye;
An' I says, 'I mun gie tha a kiss,' an' Sally says, 'Noä, thou moänt,'
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother, an' Sally says, 'doänt!'

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at fust she wur all in a tew,
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togither like birds on a beugh;
An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an' the loov o' God fur men,
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied me a kiss ov 'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like Saätan as fell
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire — thaw theer 's naw drinkin' i' Hell;
Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the wolf fro' the door,
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blubber'd awaäy o' the bed —
'Weänt niver do it naw moor;' an' Sally looökt up an' she said,
'I 'll upowd it [1] tha weänt; thou 'rt like the rest o' the men,
Thou 'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha does it ageän.
Theer 's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws, as knaws tha sa well,
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha 'll foller 'im slick into Hell.'

[1] I'll uphold it.

XII.

'Naäy,' says I, 'fur I weänt goä sniffin' about the tap.'
'Weänt tha?' she says, an' mysen I thowt i' mysen 'mayhap.'
'Noä:' an' I started awaäy like a shot, an' down to the Hinn,
An' I browt what tha seeäs stannin' theer, yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

'That caps owt,'[1] says Sally, an' saw she begins to cry,
But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says to 'er, 'Sally,' says I,
'Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord an' the power ov 'is Graäce,
Stan' 'im theer, fur I 'll looök my hennemy straäit i' the faäce,
Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let ma looök at 'im then,
'E seeäms naw moor nor watter, an' 'e 's the Divil's oän sen.'

[1] That's beyond everything.

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, could n't do naw work an' all,
Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an' poonch'd my 'and wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sattled 'ersen o' my knee,
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till ageän I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk stood a-gawmin'[1] in,
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd istead of a quart o' gin;
An' some on 'em said it wur watter — an' I wur chousin' the wife,
Fur I could n't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it nobbut to saäve my life;
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov 'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,
'Feëal thou this! thou can't graw this upo' watter!' says he.

[1] Staring vacantly.

An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as candles
was lit,
'Thou moänt do it,' he says, 'tha mun breäk
'im off bit by bit.'
'Thou 'rt but a Methody-man,' says Parson, and
laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but I respecks
tha fur that;'
An Squire, his oän very sen, walks down fro'
the 'All to see,
An' 'e spanks 'is 'and into mine, 'fur I respecks
tha,' says 'e;
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a wind fro'
far an' wide,
And browt me the booöts to be cobbled fro'
hafe the coontryside.

XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan to my
dying daäy;
I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother kind
of a waäy,

Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps 'im
cleän an' bright,
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im, an'
puts 'im back i' the light.

XVII.

Would n't a pint a' sarved as well as a quart?
Naw doubt:
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an' fowt
it out.
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I cared to
taäste,
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur I 'd feäl
mysen cleän disgraäced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My lass, when
I cooms to die,
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil 's in 'im,'
said I.
But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if Sally be
left aloän,
I 'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke 'im afoor
the Throän.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer — yon laädy a-steppin' along the streeät,
Does n't tha knaw 'er — sa pratty, an' feät, an' neät, an' sweeät?
Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe ammost spick-span-new,
An' Tommy's faäce be as fresh as a codlin wesh'd i' the dew.

XX.

'Ere be our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be a-goin to dine,
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-puddin'[1] an' Adam's wine;
But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä fur it down to the Hinn,
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noä, not fur Sally's oän kin.

[1] A pudding made with the first milk of the cow after calving.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away:
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!'
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I know you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I 've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,

And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumb-screw and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There 'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd
a hurrah, and so
The little 'Revenge' ran on sheer into the heart
of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her
ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to
the left were seen,
And the little 'Revenge' ran on thro' the long
sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from
their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the
mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like 'San Philip' that, of
fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her
yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great 'San Philip' hung
above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the
starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII.

But anon the great 'San Philip,' she bethought
herself and went,
Having that within her womb that had left her
ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they
fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes
and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog
that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out
far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one
and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their
high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her
battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew
back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd,
and so could fight us no more —
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in
the world before?

X.

For he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short
summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the
deck,

"Ship after ship, the whole night long, their
High-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her
Battle-thunder and flame."

THE REVENGE.

Photogravure from painting by W. L. Taylor.

But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;

And the masts and the rigging were lying over
the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day and a
night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die — does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink her,
split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands
of Spain!'

XII.

And the gunner said, 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen
made reply:
'We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we
yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike
another blow.'

And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded
to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship
bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir
Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their
courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a
valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound
to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!'
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had been so
valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain
so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and
his English few;

Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught
they knew,
But they sank his body with honour down into
the deep,
And they mann'd the 'Revenge' with a swar-
thier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd
for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd
awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather
to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale
blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an
earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and
their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the
shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little 'Revenge' herself went down by
the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE SISTERS.

They have left the doors ajar; and by their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the song,
Their favourite — which I call 'The Tables Turn'd.'
Evelyn begins it, 'O diviner Air.'

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that — you scarce could better that!
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with night,
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding showers,
Far from out a sky for ever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light!

Marvellously like, their voices — and themselves!
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the other,
As one is somewhat graver than the other —
Edith than Evelyn. Your good uncle, whom
You count the father of your fortune, longs
For this alliance: let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you? for I do not doubt,
Being a watchful parent, you are taken
With one or other: tho' sometimes I fear
You may be flickering, fluttering in a doubt
Between the two — which must not be — which might
Be death to one: they both are beautiful:
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says

The common voice, if one may trust it: she?
No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Woo her and gain her then: no wavering, boy!
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.
Not so: their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.
But that my best
And oldest friend, your uncle, wishes it,
And that I know you worthy every way
To be my son, I might, perchance, be loath
To part them, or part from them: and yet one
Should marry, or all the broad lands in your view
From this bay-window — which our house has held
Three hundred years — will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his own

Were silver, 'get them wedded' would he say.
And once my prattling Edith ask'd him 'why?'
'Ay, why?' said he, 'for why should I go lame?'
Then told them of his wars, and of his wound.
For see — this wine — the grape from whence it flow'd
Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the terrible ridge
Plunged in the last fierce charge at Waterloo,
And caught the laming bullet. He left me this,
Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion. Come!
Here 's to your happy union with my child!

Yet must you change your name: no fault of mine!
You say that you can do it as willingly
As birds make ready for their bridal-time
By change of feather: for all that, my boy,
Some birds are sick and sullen when they moult.
An old and worthy name! but mine that stirr'd
Among our civil wars and earlier too

Among the Roses, the more venerable.
I care not for a name — no fault of mine.
Once more — a happier marriage than my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.
The highway running by it leaves a breadth
Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,
One bright May morning in a world of song,
I lay at leisure, watching overhead
The aërial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open landaulet
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me, show'd
Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.
The face of one there sitting opposite,
On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem — with goodly rhyme and reason for it —
Possible — at first glimpse, and for a face
Gone in a moment — strange. Yet once, when first

I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,
A moonless night with storm — one lightning-
fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here — the shadows are too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment make
The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown: the
lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith — no. the other, — both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense
and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd — to be found
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping beechen
boughs

"*The Sisters.*"

THE SISTERS.

Etched by W. H. W. Bicknell from painting by W. L. Taylor.

Of our New Forest. I was there alone:
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
For ever past me by: when one quick peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,
My Rosalind in this Arden — Edith — all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,
And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me
Call'd me to join them; so with these I spent
What seem'd my crowning hour, my day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me! Was I content?
Ay — no, not quite; for now and then I thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify
The charm of Edith — that a man's ideal
Is high in Heaven, and lodged with Plato's God,
Not findable here — content, and not content,

In some such fashion as a man may be
That having had the portrait of his friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
'Good! very like! not altogether he.'

As yet I had not bound myself by words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love *me.* Then came the day when I,
Flattering myself that all my doubts were fools
Born of the fool this Age that doubts of all —
Not I that day of Edith's love or mine —
Had braced my purpose to declare myself:
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a word.
I spoke it — told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell — I heard
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the doors —
On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd — there,
There was the face, and altogether she.
The mother fell about the daughter's neck,
The sisters closed in one another's arms.

Their people throng'd about them from the hall,
And in the thick of question and reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her;
I could not free myself in honour — bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counter-pressures of the yielded hand
That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her eyes
Upon me when she thought I did not see —
Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but could I wed her
Loving the other? do her that great wrong?
Had I not dream'd I loved her yester-morn?
Had I not known where Love, at first a fear,
Grew after marriage to full height and form?
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister there —
Brother-in-law — the fiery nearness of it —
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood —
What end but darkness could ensue from this
For all the three? So Love and Honour jarr'd,

Tho' Love and Honour join'd to raise the full
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and down
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:
'My mother bids me ask' (I did not tell you —
A widow with less guile than many a child.
God help the wrinkled children that are Christ's
As well as the plump cheek — she wrought us harm,
Poor soul, not knowing!) 'are you ill?' (so ran
The letter) 'you have not been here of late.
You will not find me here. At last I go
On that long-promised visit to the North.
I told your wayside story to my mother
And Evelyn. She remembers you. Farewell.
Pray come and see my mother. Almost blind
With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks
She sees you when she hears. Again farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped to warm so far
That I could stamp my image on her heart!
'Pray come and see my mother, and farewell.'
Cold, but as welcome as free airs of heaven

After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish, strange!
What dwarfs are men! my strangled vanity
Utter'd a stifled cry — to have vext myself
And all in vain for her — cold heart or none —
No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear
To win the sister.
Whom I woo'd and won.
For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the day.
But on that day, not being all at ease,
I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passionless —
'No harm, no harm' — I turn'd again, and placed
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no word,
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn clung
In utter silence for so long, I thought,
'What, will she never set her sister free?'

We left her, happy each in each, and then,
As tho' the happiness of each in each

Were not enough, must fain have torrents, lakes,
Hills, the great things of Nature and the fair,
To lift us as it were from commonplace,
And help us to our joy. Better have sent
Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
To change with her horizon, if true Love
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-day
The great Tragedian, that had quench'd herself
In that assumption of the bridesmaid — she
That loved me — our true Edith — her brain broke
With over-acting, till she rose and fled
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain
To the deaf church — to be let in — to pray
Before *that* altar — so I think; and there

They found her beating the hard Protestant
doors.
She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At once
The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that had
sunn'd
The morning of our marriage, past away:
And on our home-return the daily want
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still
Haunted us like her ghost; and by and by,
Either from that necessity for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain innocence
Of nature, or desire that her lost child
Should earn from both the praise of heroism,
The mother broke her promise to the dead,
And told the living daughter with what love
Edith had welcomed my brief wooing of her,
And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt the
twins —
Did I not tell you they were twins? — prevail'd
So far that no caress could win my wife
Back to that passionate answer of full heart

I had from her at first. Not that her love,
Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of love,
Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous wail
For ever woke the unhappy Past again,
Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be my bride,
Put forth cold hands between us, and I fear'd
The very fountains of her life were chill'd;
So took her thence, and brought her here, and here
She bore a child, whom reverently we call'd
Edith; and in the second year was born
A second — this I named from her own self,
Evelyn; then two weeks — no more — she join'd,
In and beyond the grave, that one she loved.
Now in this quiet of declining life,
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the day,
The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
One from the other, no, nor care to tell
One from the other, only know they come,
They smile upon me, till, remembering all
The love they both have borne me, and the love

I bore them both — divided as I am
From either by the stillness of the grave —
I know not which of these I love the best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own true eyes
Are traitors to her; our quick Evelyn —
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,
And not without good reason, my good son —
Is yet untouch'd: and I that hold them both
Dearest of all things — well, I am not sure —
But if there lie a preference either way,
And in the rich vocabulary of Love
'Most dearest' be a true superlative —
I think *I* likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.[1]

I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha, my lass, fur new Squire
coom'd last night.
Butter an' heggs — yis — yis. I'll goä wi' tha
back: all right;
Butter I warrants be prime, an' I warrants the
heggs be as well,
Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya breäks
the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass o' cow-
slip wine!
I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw
they was gells o' mine,
Fur then we was all es one, the Squire an' 'is
darters an' me,
Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver not
took to she:

[1] See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

But Nelly, the last of the cletch,[1] I liked 'er
the fust on 'em all,
Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died o'
the fever at fall:
An' I thowt 't wur the will o' the Lord, but
Miss Annie she said it wur draäins,
Fur she hed n't naw coomfut in 'er, an' arn'd
naw thanks fur 'er paäins.
Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord, my childer, I han't
gotten none!
Sa new Squire 's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and,
an' owd Squire 's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass: tha dosn' knaw
what that be?
But I knaws the law, I does, for the lawyer ha
towd it me.
'When theer 's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by the fault
o' that ere maäle —
The gells they counts fur nowt, and the next
un he taäkes the taäil.'

[1] A brood of chickens.

IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell ony harm on 'im, lass? —
Naäy sit down — naw 'urry — sa cowd! — hev another glass!
Straänge an' cowd fur the time! we may happen a fall o' snaw —
Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but I likes to knaw.
An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt booöklarn'd: but 'e dosn' not coom fro' the shere;
We 'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an' we haätes booöklarnin' ere.

V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an' niver looökt arter the land —
Whoäts or tonups or taätes — 'e 'ed hallus a booök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh upo' seventy year.
An' booöks, what 's booöks? thou knaws thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer.

VI.

An' the gells, they hed n't naw taäils, an' the lawyer he towd it me
That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he could n't cut down a tree!
'Drat the trees,' says I, to be sewer I haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land an' they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied to the tramps goin' by—
An' all o' the wust i' the parish — wi' hoffens a drop in 'is eye.
An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn ridin-'erse to 'ersen,
An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms, an' was 'untin' arter the men,
An' hallus a-dallackt[1] an' dizen'd out, an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,
While 'e sit like a graät glimmer-gowk[2] wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,

[1] Overdrest in gay colours. [2] Owl.

An' 'is noäse sa grufted wi' snuff es it could n't
be scroob'd awaäy,
Fur atween 'is reädin' an' writin' 'e snifft up a
box in a daäy,
An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor arter the
birds wi' 'is gun,
An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e leäved it
to Charlie 'is son,
An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but
Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,
For 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e did n't
take kind to it like;
But I eärs es 'e 'd gie fur a howry[1] owd book
thutty pound an' moor,
An' 'e 'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen, sa I
knaw'd es 'e 'd coom to be poor;
An' 'e gied — I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow
much — fur an owd scratted stoän,
An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e got
a brown pot an' a boän,
An' 'e bowt owd money, es would n't goä, wi'
good gowd o' the Queen,
An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an' which
was a shaäme to be seen;

[1] Filthy.

But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e niver not seed to owt,
An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks; an' booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she lived she kep 'em all clear,
Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed none of 'er darters 'ere;
But arter she died we was all es one, the childer an' me,
An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens we hed 'em to tea.
Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud talk o' their Missis's waäys,
An' the Missisis talk'd o' the lasses. — I 'll tell tha some o' these daäys.
Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop, like 'er mother afoor —
'Er an' 'er blessed darter — they niver derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd
gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's letters
they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e says to
'im, meek as a mouse,
'Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the gells
'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps es
thou 'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou 'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I may
saäve mysen yit.'

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e sweärs,
an' 'e says to 'im, 'Noä.
I 've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an' be dang'd
if I iver let goä!
Coom! coom! feyther,' 'e says, 'why should n't
thy booöks be sowd?
I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe worth
their weight i' gowd.'

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booäks, I ha' seed 'em, belong'd to the Squire,
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leäves i' the middle to kindle the fire;
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd nigh to nowt at the saäle,
And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git 'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya would n't find Charlie's likes — 'e were that outdacious at 'oäm,
Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell wi' a small-tooth coämb —
Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk wi' the farmer's aäle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all — an' 'e would n't cut off the taäil.

XIII.

Thou 's coom'd oop by the beck; and a thurn be a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy es I seed it to-year —

Theerabouts Charlie joompt — and it gied me
a scare tother night,
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i' the derk,
fur it looökt sa white.
'Billy,' says 'e, 'hev a joomp!' — thaw the
banks o' the beck be sa high,
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw niver
a hair wur awry;
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an' Charlie
'e brok 'is neck,
Sa theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e lost 'is
taäil i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur gone an'
'is boy wur deäd,
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e niver
not lift oop 'is 'eäd:
Hallus a soft un, Squire! an' 'e smiled, fur 'e
hed n't naw friend,
Sa feyther an' son was buried togither, an' this
wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hes n't the call, nor the mooney,
but hes the pride,
'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the tother
side;
But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, howsiver
they präay'd an' praäy'd,
Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their
debts to be paäid.
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor owd
Squire i' the wood,
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they weänt
niver coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the long un she walkt awaäy wi' a
hofficer lad,
An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin', sa o' coorse she
be gone to the bad!
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet'arts she
niver 'ed none —
Straänge an' unheppen[1] Miss Lucy! we naämed
her 'Dot an' gaw one!'

[1] Ungainly, awkward.

An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out ony harm i' the legs,
An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd as bald as one o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big i' the mouth as a cow,
An' saw she mun hammergrate,[1] lass, or she weänt git a maäte onyhow!
An' es for Miss Annie es call'd me afoor my awn foälks to my faäce,
'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be larn'd her awn plaäce,'
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now be a-grawin' sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt not fit to be towd!

XVII.

Sa I did n't not taäke it kindly ov owd Miss Annie to saäy
Es I should be talkin' ageän 'em, es soon es they went awaäy,
Fur lawks! 'ow I cried when they went, an' our Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,

[1] Emigrate.

Fur I 'd ha done owt for the Squire an' 'is gells
es belong'd to the land;
Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther 'ere
nor theer!
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur hup-
puds o' twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd, sa I hallus
deal'd wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an' they
knaw'd what a hegg wur an' all;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they was n't
that eäsy to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they laäid
big heggs es tha seeäs;
An' I niver puts saäme[1] i' *my* butter — they does
it at Willis's farm;
Taäste another drop o' the wine — tweänt do
tha naw harm.

[1] Lard.

XIX.

Sa new Squire 's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and,
an' owd Squire 's gone;
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my night-
cap wur on;
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he coom'd
last night sa laäte --
Pluksh! ! ![1] the hens i' the peäs! why did n't
tha hesp the gaäte?

[1] A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

Our doctor had call'd in another, I never had
seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw
him come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and
of other lands —
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big mer-
ciless hands!
Wonderful cures he had done, oh, yes, but they
said too of him
He was happier using the knife than in trying
to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he look'd so
coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would
break their jests on the dead,

And mangle the living dog that had loved him
and fawn'd at his knee —
Drench'd with the hellish oorali — that ever
such things should be!

II.

Here was a boy — I am sure that some of our
children would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and
the comforting eye —
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd
out of its place —
Caught in a mill and crush'd — it was all but
a hopeless case:
And he handled him gently enough; but his
voice and his face were not kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it
and made up his mind,
And he said to me roughly, 'The lad will need
little more of your care.'
'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek the
Lord Jesus in prayer;
They are all His children here, and I pray for
them all as my own:'

But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman, can
prayer set a broken bone?'
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know
that I heard him say,
'All very well — but the good Lord Jesus has
had his day.'

III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd. It
will come by and by.
Oh, how could I serve in the wards if the hope
of the world were a lie?
How could I bear with the sights and the
loathsome smells of disease
But that He said, 'Ye do it to me, when ye do
it to these'?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward where
the younger children are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our
meek little maid;
Empty, you see, just now! We have lost her
who loved her so much —

Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive
plant to the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved
me to tears,
Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found
in a child of her years —
Nay you remember our Emmie; you used to
send her the flowers;
How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em,
talk to 'em hours after hours!
They that can wander at will where the works
of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip
out of the field;
Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all they
can know of the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like the
waft of an angel's wing;
And she lay with a flower in one hand and her
thin hands crost on her breast —
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we
thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping — so quiet, our doctor said,
'Poor little dear,

Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she 'll never
live thro' it, I fear.'

V.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as
the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward; the child did n't
see I was there.

VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved
and so vext!
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from
her cot to the next,
'He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie,
what shall I do?'
Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the wise little
Annie, 'was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me,
for, Emmie, you see,
It 's all in the picture there: "Little children
should come to me."'
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find
that it always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about his knees.)
'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then if I call to the Lord,
How should he know that it 's me? such a lot of beds in the ward!'
That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she consider'd and said:
'Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed —
The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you tell it him plain,
It 's the little girl with her arms lying out on the counterpane.'

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child — I could not watch her for four —
My brain had begun to reel — I felt I could do it no more.
That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it never would pass.
There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on the glass,

And there was a phantom cry that I heard as
I tost about,
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm
and the darkness without;
My sleep was broken besides with dreams of
the dreadful knife
And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce
would escape with her life;
Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she
stood by me and smiled,
And the doctor came at his hour, and we went
to see to the child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we believed
her asleep again —
Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on
the counterpane;
Say that His day is done! Ah, why should we
care what they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her, and
Emmie had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

Dead Princess, living Power, if that which lived
True life live on — and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not
From earthly love and life — if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into Substance — then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's praise
From thine own State, and all our breadth of realm,
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds in light,
Ascends to thee; and this March morn that sees
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,

May send one ray to thee! and who can tell —
Thou — England's England-loving daughter —
thou
Dying so English thou wouldst have her flag
Borne on thy coffin — where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our poor
earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee, I lay
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East?

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-cry!
Never with mightier glory than when we had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of Lucknow —
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the hold that we held with our lives —
Women and children among us, God help them, our children and wives!

Hold it we might — and for fifteen days or for twenty at most.
'Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post!'
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the best of the brave:
Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him — we laid him that night in his grave.
'Every man die at his post!' and there hail'd on our houses and halls
Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from their cannon-balls,
Death in our innermost chamber, and death at our slight barricade,
Death while we stood with the musket, and death while we stoopt to the spade,
Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded, for often there fell,
Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro' it, their shot and their shell,
Death — for their spies were among us, their marksmen were told of our best,
So that the brute bullet broke thro' the brain that could think for the rest;

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets
would rain at our feet —
Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels
that girdled us round —
Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the
breadth of a street,
Death from the heights of the mosque and the
palace, and death in the ground!
Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down,
down! and creep thro' the hole!
Keep the revolver in hand! you can hear him
— the murderous mole!
Quiet, ah! quiet — wait till the point of the
pickaxe be thro'!
Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer
again than before —
Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark
pioneer is no more;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew!

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times,
and it chanced on a day

Soon as the blast of that underground thunder-
clap echo'd away,
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so
many fiends in their hell —
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley,
and yell upon yell —
Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy
fell.
What have they done? where is it? Out yon-
der. Guard the Redan!
Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-
gate! storm, and it ran
Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on
every side
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily
drown'd by the tide —
So many thousands that, if they be bold enough,
who shall escape?
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know
we are soldiers and men!
Ready! take aim at their leaders — their masses
are gapp'd with our grape —
Backward they reel like the wave, like the
wave flinging forward again,

Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful
they could not subdue;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were English
in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to com-
mand, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison
hung but on him;
Still — could we watch at all points? we were
every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only a
whisper that past:
'Children and wives — if the tigers leap into
the fold unawares —
Every man die at his post — and the foe may
outlive us at last —
Better to fall by the hands that they love, than
to fall into theirs!'
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by the
enemy sprung

Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our poor palisades.
Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure that your hand be as true!
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed are your flank fusillades —
Twice do we hurl them to earth from the ladders to which they had clung,
Twice from the ditch where they shelter we drive them with hand-grenades;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

V.

Then on another wild morning another wild earthquake out-tore
Clean from our lines of defence ten or twelve good paces or more.
Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there from the light of the sun —
One has leapt up on the breach, crying out: 'Follow me, follow me!' —
Mark him — he falls! then another, and *him* too, and down goes he.

Had they been bold enough then, who can tell
but the traitors had won?
Boardings and rafters and doors — an embra-
sure! make way for the gun!
Now double-charge it with grape! It is
charged and we fire, and they run.
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the dark
face have his due!
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought
with us, faithful and few,
Fought with the bravest among us, and drove
them, and smote them, and slew,
That ever upon the topmost roof our banner in
India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not what
we do. We can fight!
But to be soldier all day, and be sentinel all
thro' the night —
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their
lying alarms,
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shout-
ings and soundings to arms,

Ever the labour of fifty that had to be done by five,
Ever the marvel among us that one should be left alive,
Ever the day with its traitorous death from the loopholes around,
Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in the ground,
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract skies,
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment of flies,
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an English field,
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would* not be heal'd,
Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless knife, —
Torture and trouble in vain, — for it never could save us a life.
Valour of delicate women who tended the hospital bed,
Horror of women in travail among the dying and dead,

Grief for our perishing children, and never a
moment for grief,
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes
of relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for
all that we knew —
Then day and night, day and night, coming
down on the still-shatter'd walls
Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands of
cannon-balls —
But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what was
told by the scout,
Outram and Havelock breaking their way
through the fell mutineers?
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing again
in our ears!
All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant
shout,
Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with
conquering cheers,

Sick from the hospital echo them, women and children come out,
Blessing the wholesome white faces of Havelock's good fusileers,
Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the Highlander wet with their tears!
Dance to the pibroch! — saved! we are saved! — is it you? is it you?
Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved by the blessing of Heaven!
'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held it for eighty-seven!
And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere hereabout
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one, I trow —
I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone;
I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,
For I am emptier than a friar's brains;
But God is with me in this wilderness,
These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms —
And God's free air, and hope of better things.

I would I knew their speech; not now to glean,
Not now — I hope to do it — some scatter'd ears,
Some ears for Christ in this wild field of Wales —
But, bread, merely for bread. This tongue that wagg'd
They said with such heretical arrogance
Against the proud archbishop Arundel —
So much God's cause was fluent in it — is here
But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;
'Bara!' — what use? The shepherd, when I speak,
Vailing a sudden eyelid with his hard
'Dim Saesneg' passes, wroth at things of old —
No fault of mine. Had he God's word in Welsh
He might be kindlier: happily come the day!

Not least art thou, thou little Bethlehem
In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;
Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
Least, for in thee the word was born again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living word,
Who whilome spakest to the South in Greek
About the soft Mediterranean shores,
And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
As good need was — thou hast come to talk our isle.
Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
Must learn to use the tongues of all the world.
Yet art thou thine own witness that thou bringest
Not peace, a sword, a fire.
What did he say,
My frighted Wiclif-preacher whom I crost
In flying hither? that one night a crowd
Throng'd the waste field about the city gates:
The king was on them suddenly with a host.
Why there? they came to hear their preacher. Then
Some cried on Cobham, on the good Lord Cobham;
Ay, for they love me! but the king — nor voice
Nor finger raised against him — took and hang'd,
Took, hang'd and burnt — how many — thirty-nine —

Call'd it rebellion — hang'd, poor friends, as rebels
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your priest
Labels — to take the king along with him —
All heresy, treason: but to call men traitors
May make men traitors.
Rose of Lancaster,
Red in thy birth, redder with household war,
Now reddest with the blood of holy men,
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster —
If somewhere in the North, as Rumour sang
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lusting line —
By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,[1]
That were my rose, there my allegiance due.
Self-starved, they say — nay, murder'd, doubtless dead.
So to this king I cleaved: my friend was he,
Once my fast friend: I would have given my life
To help his own from scathe, a thousand lives
To save his soul. He might have come to learn

[1] Richard II.

Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly priests,
Who fear the king's hard common-sense should find
What rotten piles uphold their mason-work,
Urge him to foreign war. Oh, had he will'd
I might have stricken a lusty stroke for him,
But he would not; far liever led my friend
Back to the pure and universal church,
But he would not: whether that heirless flaw
In his throne's title make him feel so frail,
He leans on Antichrist; or that his mind,
So quick, so capable in soldiership,
In matters of the faith, alas the while!
More worth than all the kingdoms of this world,
Runs in the rut, a coward to the priest.

Burnt — good Sir Roger Acton, my dear friend!
Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley!
Lord give thou power to thy two witnesses,
Lest the false faith make merry over them!
Two — nay but thirty-nine have risen and stand,

Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
Before thy light, and cry continually —
Cry — against whom?
Him, who should bear the sword
Of Justice — what! the kingly, kindly boy;
Who took the world so easily heretofore,
My boon companion, tavern-fellow — him
Who gibed and japed — in many a merry tale
That shook our sides — at pardoners, summon-
ers,
Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries
And nunneries, when the wild hour and the
wine
Had set the wits aflame.
Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East?
Better to sink
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits
Of wine and harlotry — thy shame, and mine,
Thy comrade — than to persecute the Lord,
And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred Arundel
Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the flame,

The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his clerks
Into the suburb — their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten
Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul — a shame to speak of them —
Among the heathen —
Sanctuary granted
To bandit, thief, assassin — yea, to him
Who hacks his mother's throat — denied to him
Who finds the Saviour in his mother tongue.
The Gospel, the priest's pearl, flung down to swine —
The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who will come,
God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.
Ah, rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel, meant
To course and range thro' all the world, should be
Tether'd to these dead pillars of the Church —
Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart, and life
Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how long,

O Lord, how long!
My friend should meet me here.
Here is the copse, the fountain and — a cross!
To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor knees.
Rather to thee, green boscage, work of God,
Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring-tree!
Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn
By this good Wiclif mountain down from heaven,
And speaking clearly in thy native tongue —
No Latin — He that thirsteth, come and drink!

Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking me
To worship Holy Cross! I spread mine arms,
God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and blood
And holier. That was heresy. (My good friend
By this time should be with me.) 'Images?'
'Bury them as God's truer images
Are daily buried.' 'Heresy. — Penance?'
'Fast,
Hair-shirt and scourge — nay, let a man repent,
Do penance in his heart, God hears him.'
'Heresy —

Not shriven, not saved?' 'What profits an ill
priest
Between me and my God? I would not spurn
Good counsel of good friends, but shrive myself —
No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'
(My friend is long in coming.) 'Pilgrimages?'
'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-dances, vice.
The poor man's money gone to fat the friar.
Who reads of begging saints in Scripture?' — 'Heresy' —
(Hath he been here — not found me — gone again?
Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?) 'Bread —
Bread left after the blessing?' how they stared,
That was their main test-question — glared at me!
'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He veils
His flesh in bread, body and bread together.'
Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd wolves,
'No bread, no bread. God's body!' Archbishop, bishop,

Priors, canons, friars, bell-ringers, parish-
clerks —
'No bread, no bread!' — 'Authority of the
Church,
Power of the keys!' — Then I, God help
me, I
So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two whole
days —
I lost myself and fell from evenness,
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever since
Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
Into the church, had only proven themselves
Poisoners, murderers. Well — God pardon
all —
Me, them, and all the world — yea, that proud
priest,
That mock-meek mouth of utter Antichrist,
That traitor to King Richard and the truth,
Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.
Amen!
Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
Be by me in my death.
Those three! the fourth
Was like the Son of God! Not burnt were they.

On *them* the smell of burning had not past.
That was a miracle to convert the king.
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel
What miracle could turn? *He* here again,
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,
He would be found a heretic to Himself,
And doom'd to burn alive.
So, caught, I burn.
Burn? heathen men have borne as much as this,
For freedom, or the sake of those they loved,
Or some less cause, some cause far less than mine;
For every other cause is less than mine.
The moth will singe her wings, and singed return,
Her love of light quenching her fear of pain —
How now, my soul, we do not heed the fire?
Faint-hearted? tut! — faint-stomach'd! faint as I am,
God willing, I will burn for Him.
Who comes?
A thousand marks are set upon my head.
Friend? — foe perhaps — a tussle for it then!

Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee?
I have not broken bread for fifty hours.
None? I am damn'd already by the priest
For holding there was bread where bread was none —
No bread. My friends await me yonder? Yes.
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?
Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand.
I am not like to die for lack of bread,
For I must live to testify by fire.[1]

[1] He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised brows I read
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.
We brought this iron from our isles of gold.

Does the King know you deign to visit him
Whom once he rose from off his throne to greet
Before his people, like his brother king?
I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona — tho' you were not then
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself
To meet me, roar'd my name; the King, the Queen,
Bade me be seated, speak, and tell them all
The story of my voyage, and while I spoke
The crowd's roar fell as at the 'Peace, be still!'

And when I ceased to speak, the King, the
Queen,
Sank from their thrones, and melted into tears,
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and voice
In praise to God who led me thro' the waste.
And then the great 'Laudamus' rose to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean! chains
For him who gave a new heaven, a new earth,
As holy John had prophesied of me,
Gave glory and more empire to the kings
Of Spain than all their battles! chains for him
Who push'd his prows into the setting sun,
And made West East, and sail'd the Dragon's
mouth,
And came upon the Mountain of the World,
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the Ocean, we,
We and our sons for ever. Ferdinand
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic Queen —
Of the Ocean — of the Indies — Admirals we —
Our title, which we never mean to yield,
Our guerdon not alone for what we did,

But our amends for all we might have done —
The vast occasion of our stronger life —
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in your Spain,
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth the babe
Will suck in with his milk hereafter — earth
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.
We fronted there the learning of all Spain,
All their cosmogonies, their astronomies:
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the golden guess
Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
No guess-work! I was certain of my goal;
Some thought it heresy, but that would not hold.
King David call'd the heavens a hide, a tent
Spread over earth, and so this earth was flat:
Some cited old Lactantius: could it be
That trees grew downward, rain fell upward, men
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and besides,
The great Augustine wrote that none could breathe

Within the zone of heat; so might there be
Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was clean
Against God's word: thus was I beaten back,
And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,
And thought to turn my face from Spain, appeal
Once more to France or England; but our Queen
Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
Were half-assured this earth might be a sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
All glory to the mother of our Lord,
And Holy Church, from whom I never swerved
Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet — not all — last night a dream — I sail'd
On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights
Of my first crew, their curses and their groans.
The great flame-banner borne by Teneriffe,
The compass, like an old friend false at last
In our most need, appall'd them, and the wind

Still westward, and the weedy seas — at length
The land-bird, and the branch with berries on it,
The carven staff — and last the light, the light
On Guanahani! but I changed the name;
San Salvador I call'd it; and the light
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad sky
Of dawning over — not those alien palms,
The marvel of that fair new nature — not
That Indian isle, but our most ancient East
Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw
The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat
Thro' all the homely town from jasper, sapphire,
Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
Jacynth, and amethyst — and those twelve gates,
Pearl — and I woke, and thought — death — I shall die —
I am written in the Lamb's own Book of Life
To walk within the glory of the Lord
Sunless and moonless, utter light — but no!
The Lord had sent this bright, strange dream to me

To mind me of the secret vow I made
When Spain was waging war against the
Moor —
I strove myself with Spain against the Moor.
There came two voices from the Sepulchre,
Two friars crying that if Spain should oust
The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and raze
The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I vow'd
That, if our princes harken'd to my prayer,
Whatever wealth I brought from that new world
Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead
A new crusade against the Saracen,
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your princes gold
enough
If left alone! Being but a Genovese,
I am handled worse than had I been a Moor,
And breach'd the belting wall of Cambalu,
And given the Great Khan's palaces to the
Moor,
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester John,
And cast it to the Moor: but *had* I brought

From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all
The gold that Solomon's navies carried home,
Would that have gilded *me?* Blue blood of Spain,
Tho' quartering your own royal arms of Spain,
I have not: blue blood and black blood of Spain,
The noble and the convict of Castile,
Howl'd me from Hispaniola; for you know
The flies at home, that ever swarm about
And cloud the highest heads, and murmur down
Truth in the distance — these outbuzz'd me so
That even our prudent King, our righteous Queen —
I pray'd them being so calumniated
They would commission one of weight and worth
To judge between my slander'd self and me —
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
They sent me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one
As ignorant and impolitic as a beast —
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed — who sack'd

My dwelling, seized upon my papers, loosed
My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,
Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing, gave
All but free leave for all to work the mines,
Drove me and my good brothers home in chains,
And gathering ruthless gold — a single piece
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos — so
They tell me — weigh'd him down into the abysm —
The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,
The seas of our discovering over-roll
Him and his gold; the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to the shore.
There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God
Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my lord,
I swear to you I heard His voice between
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,
'O soul of little faith, slow to believe!
Have I not been about thee from thy birth?
Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-sea?

Set thee in light till time shall be no more?
Is it I who have deceived thee or the world?
Endure! thou hast done so well for men, that men
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
With mine own Son?'

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when drowning hope
Sank all but out of sight, I heard His voice,
'Be not cast down. I lead thee by the hand,
Fear not.' And I shall hear His voice again —
I know that He has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work His will —
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and king —
The first discoverer starves — his followers, all
Flower into fortune — our world's way — and I,
Without a roof that I can call mine own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,
And seeing what a door for scoundrel scum

I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles —
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,
Their wives and children Spanish concubines,
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in blood,
Some dead of hunger, some beneath the scourge,
Some over-labour'd, some by their own hands, —
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature, kill
Their babies at the breast for hate of Spain —
Ah God, the harmless people whom we found
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!
Who took us for the very Gods from Heaven,
And we have sent them very fiends from Hell;
And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic Queen
Smiles on me, saying, 'Be thou comforted!
This creedless people will be brought to Christ
And own the holy governance of Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who bore the
Cross

Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalised the Cross,
By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe
These hard memorials of our truth to Spain
Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet
Pardon — too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd with
pains.

You see that I have hung them by my bed,
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are God's
Own voice to justify the dead — perchance
Spain, once the most chivalric race on earth,
Spain, then the mightiest, wealthiest realm on
earth,
So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave will say,
'Behold the bones of Christopher Colòn' —
'Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean — the
chains?' —

I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain
Who then will have to answer, 'These same chains
Bound these same bones back thro' the Atlantic sea,
Which he unchain'd for all the world to come.'

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls in Hell
And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do — for the moment. Stay, my son
Is here anon: my son will speak for me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that grind
Bone against bone. You will not. One last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you tell
King Ferdinand who plays with me, that one
Whose life has been no play with him and his
Hidalgos — shipwrecks, famines, fevers, fights,
Mutinies, treacheries — wink'd at, and condoned —
That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready — tho' our Holy Catholic Queen,

Who fain had pledged her jewels on my first
voyage,
Whose hope was mine to spread the Catholic
faith,
Who wept with me when I return'd in chains,
Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
To whom I send my prayer by night and day —
She is gone — but you will tell the King, that I,
Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd with
pains
Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet
Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,
And readier, if the King would hear, to lead
One last crusade against the Saracen,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you have
dared
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor thanks!
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND.
A.D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race — he had stricken
my father dead —
But I gather'd my fellows together, I swore I
would strike off his head.
Each of them look'd like a king, and was noble
in birth as in worth,
And each of them boasted he sprang from the
oldest race upon earth.
Each was as brave in the fight as the bravest
hero of song,
And each of them liefer had died than have
done one another a wrong.
He lived on an isle in the ocean — we sail'd on
a Friday morn —
He that had slain my father the day before I
was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and there
on the shore was he.
But a sudden blast blew us out and away thro'
a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we never
had touch'd at before,
Where a silent ocean always broke on a silent
shore,
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light without sound, and the long waterfalls
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base of
the mountain walls,
And the poplar and cypress unshaken by storm
flourish'd up beyond sight,
And the pine shot aloft from the crag to an
unbelievable height,
And high in the heaven above it there flicker'd
a songless lark,
And the cock could n't crow, and the bull
could n't low, and the dog could n't bark.

And round it we went, and thro' it, but never
a murmur, a breath —
It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it quiet
as death,
And we hated the beautiful isle, for whenever
we strove to speak
Our voices were thinner and fainter than any
flittermouse-shriek;
And the men that were mighty of tongue and
could raise such a battle-cry
That a hundred who heard it would rush on a
thousand lances and die —
Oh, they to be dumb'd by the charm! — so flus-
ter'd with anger were they
They almost fell on each other; but after we
sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we
landed, a score of wild birds
Cried from the topmost summit with human
voices and words;
Once in an hour they cried, and whenever their
voices peal'd

The steer fell down at the plow and the harvest
died from the field,
And the men dropt dead in the valleys and half
of the cattle went lame,
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and the
dwelling broke into flame;
And the shouting of these wild birds ran into
the hearts of my crew,
Till they shouted along with the shouting and
seized one another and slew;
But I drew them the one from the other; I saw
that we could not stay,
And we left the dead to the birds, and we sail'd
with our wounded away.

V.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers: their
breath met us out on the seas,
For the Spring and the middle Summer sat
each on the lap of the breeze;
And the red passion-flower to the cliffs, and
the dark-blue clematis, clung,
And starr'd with a myriad blossom the long
convolvulus hung;

And the topmost spire of the mountain was lilies in lieu of snow,
And the lilies like glaciers winded down, running out below
Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the blaze of gorse, and the blush
Of millions of roses that sprang without leaf or a thorn from the bush;
And the whole isle-side flashing down from the peak without ever a tree
Swept like a torrent of gems from the sky to the blue of the sea;
And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and vaunted our kith and our kin,
And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and chanted the triumph of Finn,
Till each like a golden image was pollen'd from head to feet
And each was as dry as a cricket, with thirst in the middle-day heat.
Blossom and blossom, and promise of blossom, but never a fruit!
And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we hated the isle that was mute,

And we tore up the flowers by the million and flung them in bight and bay,
And we left but a naked rock, and in anger we sail'd away.

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits: all round from the cliffs and the capes,
Purple or amber, dangled a hundred fathom of grapes,
And the warm melon lay like a little sun on the tawny sand,
And the fig ran up from the beach and rioted over the land,
And the mountain arose like a jewell'd throne thro' the fragrant air,
Glowing with all-colour'd plums and with golden masses of pear,
And the crimson and scarlet of berries that flamed upon bine and vine,
But in every berry and fruit was the poisonous pleasure of wine;
And the peak of the mountain was apples, the hugest that ever were seen,

And they prest, as they grew, on each other,
with hardly a leaflet between,
And all of them redder than rosiest health or
than utterest shame,
And setting, when Even descended, the very
sunset aflame;
And we stay'd three days, and we gorged and
we madden'd, till every one drew
His sword on his fellow to slay him, and ever
they struck and they slew;
And myself, I had eaten but sparely, and
fought till I sunder'd the fray,
Then I bade them remember my father's death,
and we sail'd away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire: we were
lured by the light from afar,
For the peak sent up one league of fire to the
Northern Star;
Lured by the glare and the blare, but scarcely
could stand upright,
For the whole isle shudder'd and shook like a
man in a mortal affright;

We were giddy besides with the fruits we had gorged, and so crazed that at last
There were some leap'd into the fire; and away we sail'd, and we past
Over that undersea isle, where the water is clearer than air:
Down we look'd: what a garden! O bliss, what a Paradise there!
Towers of a happier time, low down in a rainbow deep
Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep!
And three of the gentlest and best of my people, whate'er I could say,
Plunged head-down in the sea, and the Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where the heavens lean low on the land,
And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd o'er us a sun-bright hand,
Then it open'd and dropt at the side of each man, as he rose from his rest,

Bread enough for his need till the labourless
day dipt under the West;
And we wander'd about it and thro' it. O never
was time so good!
And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and the
boast of our ancient blood,
And we gazed at the wandering wave as we
sat by the gurgle of springs,
And we chanted the songs of the Bards and the
glories of fairy kings;
But at length we began to be weary, to sigh,
and to stretch and yawn,
Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the sun-
bright hand of the dawn,
For there was not an enemy near, but the whole
green isle was our own,
And we took to playing at ball, and we took to
throwing the stone,
And we took to playing at battle, but that was
a perilous play,
For the passion of battle was in us, we slew
and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches and heard their musical cry —
'Come to us, oh, come, come!' in the stormy red of a sky
Dashing the fires and the shadows of dawn on the beautiful shapes,
For a wild witch naked as heaven stood on each of the loftiest capes,
And a hundred ranged on the rock like white sea-birds in a row,
And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced on the wrecks in the sand below,
And a hundred splash'd from the ledges, and bosom'd the burst of the spray,
But I knew we should fall on each other, and hastily sail'd away.

X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle of the Double Towers,
One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved all over with flowers,

But an earthquake always moved in the hollows
under the dells,
And they shock'd on each other and butted each
other with clashing of bells,
And the daws flew out of the towers and
jangled and wrangled in vain,
And the clash and boom of the bells rang into
the heart and the brain,
Till the passion of battle was on us, and all
took sides with the towers,
There were some for the clean-cut stone, there
were more for the carven flowers,
And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd over
us all the day,
For the one half slew the other, and after we
sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who had
sail'd with Saint Brendan of yore,
He had lived ever since on the isle and his
winters were fifteen score,
And his voice was low as from other worlds,
and his eyes were sweet,

And his white hair sank to his heels, and his white beard fell to his feet,
And he spake to me, 'O Maeldune, let be this purpose of thine!
Remember the words of the Lord when he told us, "Vengeance is mine!"
His fathers have slain thy fathers in war or in single strife,
Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each taken a life for a life,
Thy father had slain his father, how long shall the murder last?
Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer the Past to be Past.'
And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard, and we pray'd as we heard him pray,
And the holy man he assoil'd us, and sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the isle we were blown from, and there on the shore was he,
The man that had slain my father. I saw him and let him be.

Oh, weary was I of the travel, the trouble, the
strife, and the sin,
When I landed again, with a tithe of my men,
on the Isle of Finn!

DE PROFUNDIS:

THE TWO GREETINGS.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Where all that was to be, in all that was,
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddying light —
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
And every phase of ever-heightening life,
And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
With this last moon, this crescent — her dark orb
Touch'd with earth's light — thou comest, darling boy;
Our own; a babe in lineament and limb
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man;
Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,

Indissolubly married like our love;
Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve
This mortal race thy kin so well that men
May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life
Breaking with laughter from the dark; and may
The fated channel where thy motion lives
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course
Along the years of haste and random youth
Unshatter'd; then full-current thro' full man;
And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
To that last deep where we and thou are still.

II.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that great deep, before our world begins,
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he will —
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that true world within the world we see,
Whereof our world is but the bounding shore —
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,

With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden sun
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

II.

For in the world which is not ours They said,
'Let us make man,' and that which should be man,
From that one light no man can look upon,
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit, half-lost
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou — who wailest being born
And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world
Among the numerable-innumerable
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space
In finite-infinite Time — our mortal veil
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,
Who made thee unconceivably Thyself
Out of His whole World-self and all in all —
Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the grape
And ivy-berry, choose; and still depart

From death to death thro' life and life, and find
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

HALLOWED be Thy name — Halleluiah! —
  Infinite Ideality!
  Immeasurable Reality!
  Infinite Personality!
Hallowed be Thy name — Halleluiah!

II.

We feel we are nothing — for all is Thou and
    in Thee;
We feel we are something — *that* also has come
    from Thee;
We know we are nothing — but Thou wilt help
    us to be.
Hallowed be Thy name— Halleluiah!

SONNETS.

SONNETS.

PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fleeted far and fast
To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill
Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
Have charter'd this; where, mindful of the past,
Our true co-mates regather round the mast;
Of diverse tongue, but with a common will
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil
And crocus, to put forth and brave the blast;
For some, descending from the sacred peak
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again
Their lot with ours to rove the world about;
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek
If any golden harbour be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

Brooks, for they call'd you so that knew you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard Saint Mary's chimes!
How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!
How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,
Who loved you well! Now both are gone to rest.
You man of humorous-melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony — is it so?
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away!
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:
Σκιᾶς ὄναρ — dream of a shadow, go —
God bless you! I shall join you in a day.

MONTENEGRO.

They rose to where their sovran eagle sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere scales
Their headlong passes, but his footstep fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone flight
By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,
French of the French, and Lord of human tears;
Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,
Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy peers;
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years
As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France!
Who dost not love our England — so they say;
I know not — England, France, all man to be
Will make one people ere man's race be run:
And I, desiring that diviner day,
Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy
To younger England in the boy my son.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

I.

[1] ATHELSTAN King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of Barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a lifelong
Glory in battle,
Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield-wall,

[1] I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the "Contemporary Review" (November, 1876).

Hew'd the linden-wood,[1]
Hack'd the battle-shield,
Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
Got from their grandsires —
Theirs that so often in
Strife with their enemies
Struck for their hoards and their hearths and their homes.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the ship-crews
Doom'd to the death.
All the field with blood of the fighters
Flow'd, from when first the great
Sun-star of morning-tide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious creature
Sank to his setting.

[1] Shields of lindenwood.

IV.

There lay many a man
Marr'd by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies
Troubled the track of the host that we hated,
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the grindstone,
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his hand-play,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the

Weltering waters
Borne in the bark's-bosom,
Drew to this island:
Doom'd to the death.

VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his war-ship;
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero!

X.

Slender warrant had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives —
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had
Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war!

XI.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive —
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties —
He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better
In perils of battle
On places of slaughter —

The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,
The crash of the charges,[1]
The wielding of weapons —
The play that they play'd with
The children of Edward.

XII.

Then with their nail'd prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-redden'd relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,
Shaping their way toward Dyflen[2] again,
Shamed in their souls.

XIII.

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-Saxonland,
Glad of the war.

[1] Lit. "the gathering of men." [2] Dublin.

XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin —
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it, and
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

XV.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge —
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories —
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with
Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and round
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to heaven
Far off from out an island girt by foes,
All day the men contend in grievous war
From their own city, but with set of sun
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the neighbours round
May see, and sail to help them in the war;
So from his head the splendour went to heaven.
From wall to dyke he stept, he stood, nor join'd
The Achæans — honouring his wise mother's word —

There standing, shouted, and Pallas far away
Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the foe.
For like the clear voice when a trumpet shrills,
Blown by the fierce beleaguerers of a town,
So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;
And when the brazen cry of Æakidês
Was heard among the Trojans, all their hearts
Were troubled, and the full-maned horses whirl'd
The chariots backward, knowing griefs at hand;
And sheer-astounded were the charioteers
To see the dread, unweariable fire
That always o'er the great Peleion's head
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made it burn.
Thrice from the dyke he sent his mighty shout,
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and allies;
And there and then twelve of their noblest died
Among their spears and chariots.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

O you that were eyes and light to the King till
he past away
From the darkness of life —
He saw not his daughter — he blest her: the
blind King sees you to-day,
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

NOT here! the white North has thy bones; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown
In power, and ever growest, since thine own
Fair Florence honouring thy nativity,
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from me,
I, wearing but the garland of a day,
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away.

NOTES.

NOTES.

ENOCH ARDEN.

'ENOCH ARDEN' was first published in 1864, and has been one of the most popular of the poet's works, not only in English-speaking countries, but also on the continent of Europe. Mr. Eugene Parsons, in his interesting pamphlet on 'Tennyson's Life and Poetry' (2d edition, 1893), enumerates no less than twenty-four foreign translations: nine in German, two in Dutch, one in Danish, one in Bohemian, eight in French, one in Spanish, and two in Italian. There is also a Latin version by Mr. W. Selwyn (London, 1867).

'Blackwood's Magazine,' for November, 1864, says of the poem: '"Enoch Arden" is a true *idyl*. . . . It is a simple story of a seafaring man's sorrows; not aspiring to the dimensions or the pompous march of the strain which sings heroes and their exploits, but charming the heart by its true pathos, and the ear by a sweet music of its own. It fulfils, so far as we understand them, the conditions of the modern Idyl; which are, to depict the joys and sorrows of humble life — to describe those beauties of nature which, unperceived, enhance the former and soothe the latter — and (most important of all) to be short. Such notably (to take examples from the Laureate's earlier poems) are "The Gardener's Daughter" and "Dora," with their sweet English landscapes and true and tender feeling. Similar idyls abound in Wordsworth's poems; but had *he* undertaken such a tale as "Enoch Arden," we feel certain he would have left our last condition unfulfilled. . . . Now, one thing especially to be praised in "Enoch Arden" is the con-

ciseness with which the poet tells his story. He indulges in no digressions, in no descriptions which are not required for its full comprehension; he rehearses no long conversations, and makes no unnecessary remarks of his own. On the one hand, there is no sentimental dawdling over the sad situations which occur in the narrative; on the other, there is no hurry in its march, and no excessive compression of any of its portions. These are excellences which it seems, to the inexperienced, easy to reach; the like may be their judgment on the smooth flow of the verse of the poem; and perchance some of our young friends may think that to write thus is no very difficult attainment. We only answer, let them try. It is well known that easy writing proves very hard reading. There is no doubt that the converse of this is true, and that, mostly, easy reading has been very hard writing. But art's true triumph is to make the reader insensible to the labour which it has cost. That expended on "Enoch Arden" effects this so completely as to require, and well repay, very close attention.'

The 'Quarterly Review' for January, 1866, remarks: 'The poem of "Enoch Arden" . . . bears evident marks of being a cherished work, perfected by untiring and affectionate care. In point of execution it ranks with "Elaine" and "Guinevere," and in point of story it ranks with those domestic idyls for which Mr. Tennyson is so justly celebrated, and the subjects of which seem so well fitted to his genius. . . . To read once or twice only a work so careful and so beautiful, is an actual wrong to the author, the very perfection of whose art lies in the chastened reserve and elusive delicacy of his touches. The opening scene of the poem is laid in a fishing-village, a quaint, self-contained little port, whose counterpart may be found in many a bay on the eastward coast of England. The first lines, which set this scene before us, are so simple, the effect of them is so complete, and the separate touches so firm, that condensation is impossible: —

> Long lines of cliff breaking have left a chasm,
> And in the chasm are foam and yellow sands;

Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf
In cluster ; then a moulder'd church ; and higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd mill ;
And high in heaven behind it a gray down
With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

We ask attention here, not to the direct purpose of the description alone, but also to the fine craft by which these opening lines are made to serve the unity of the piece. Out of the chord thus struck, every future change will flow, and no unmeaning note is found within it. Ever in our minds will be the sea and its power, with the life of rest upon the limit of it. There will be also the church with its memories, its giving in marriage, and its gathering of the dead together in hope ; and there again the mill, and high in heaven behind the gray and breezy down, which with the sea gave strength and breadth to the hearts of those who lived upon them, and whose hazelwood, in its cuplike hollow, resounded to their childish mirth, and was the kindly shelter of the passions of their stronger years. Here a hundred years ago three children of three homes . . . played upon the shore ; and here with exquisite feeling the poet makes them playing out day by day the mimic symbols of their future life — castles of sand dissolving in the tide, strings of little footprints daily washed away ; and the housekeeping in the cave, when each in turn would marry Annie Lee, with their strivings for her, her little sorrows in their strife, and her promise to be "little wife to both." Thus grew up their loves. . . .

'We would pause here for a moment to point out the skill and judgment which Mr. Tennyson has shown in giving intensity and sinew to the passion of his tale by the slight leaven of a Puritan faith. The want of moral grandeur in modern life is one of the chief difficulties with which a modern poet has to deal ; nor can he longer fill this want by use of those supernatural systems which are now fitly called "machineries." This difficulty the Laureate has successfully evaded by laying

the scene of his action in a secluded fishing-port, where a stern creed had grown up under the changeful northern sky and the mysterious perils of the sea; and where the traditional superstitions of a sailor life were woven in with an intense and living belief handed down from a Puritan ancestry. The occasional use of supernatural means, such as Annie's dream, so falls evenly upon the reader's mind, and certain superstitious observances are justified; while a moral sublimity is also gained which gives depth and unity to the tone of the poem. . . .

'We have reviewed this poem at some length, because we look upon it as among the best of the poet's works. Taking all its merits into consideration, we think that no other of his poems can reach above it. It has length enough to show sustained effort; the story is dramatic, and told with a simple and complete effect; and the parts are, first of all, in perfect subordination to the whole and one another; secondly, are beautiful in themselves.'

For other reviews of the poem, see the 'North British Review,' vol. xli. p. 231; the 'British Quarterly Review,' vol. xl. p. 463; the 'Westminster Review,' vol. lxxxii. p. 396; the 'London Quarterly Review,' vol. xxiii. p. 153; and 'Chambers's Journal,' vol. xli. p. 620.

According to the 'British Quarterly Review' for October, 1880, the stories of both 'Enoch Arden' and 'Aylmer's Field' were 'told by a friend to the poet, who, struck by their aptitude for versification, requested to have them at length in writing. When they were thus supplied, the poetic versions were made as we now have them.' See also Jennings's 'Lord Tennyson' (London, 1884, page 184) for a similar account of the origin of these poems.

PAGE 3. — *Long lines of cliff, etc.* — It is said that this description was suggested by the scenery of Clovelly in Devonshire; but, as the writer in the 'Quarterly Review' remarks (see page 290 above), such quaint little fishing villages are to be found elsewhere in England. Mr. J. Cuming Walters ('Tennyson; Poet, Philosopher, Idealist,' London, 1893) says that

Deal is the place; but his identification of localities in the poems is not always to be trusted.

Danish barrows. — These ancient sepulchral mounds, some of which are supposed to be older than the Danish, or even the Roman conquest, are common in Great Britain, especially in Wilts and Dorset. Compare 'Tithonus': 'And grassy barrows of the happier dead.'

By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes. — A line somewhat harsh, as the reader who gives every word its full enunciation will perceive. Tennyson rarely errs in that way.

PAGE 4. — *The helpless wrath of tears.* — A good example of the poet's felicitous condensation of phrase.

PAGE 5. — *From the dread sweep of the down-streaming seas.* — An admirably graphic line.

PAGE 6. — *All kindled by a still and sacred fire, etc.* — 'How could the high devotion of Enoch's love be brought more strikingly before us than in these few words?' ('Quarterly Review').

PAGE 8. — *Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man.* — Peter Bayne remarks: 'Very notable is the stress which the poet lays upon the religion of Enoch.' Compare what the 'Quarterly' reviewer says, page 291 above.

PAGE 10. — *This voyage more than once.* — 'Voyage' is here metrically a dissyllable, as in several lines further on. Compare 'Julius Cæsar,' iv. 3. 20: 'Omitted, all the voyage of their life,' etc. The word is oftener monosyllabic in modern verse, and even in Shakespeare.

PAGE 12. — *Nay, for I love him, etc.* — This is said in reply to a *look* from Annie.

PAGE 13. — *Keep everything shipshape.* — The critic in 'Blackwood' 'strongly objects' to this nautical phrase. He adds: 'In real life men do not delight in the slang of the calling as much as books make them do — least of all in their solemn moments. We hope to see *shipshape* omitted in future editions. But who can fail to admire the rest of the speech?'

The objection to *shipshape* is hypercritical. The word is

not 'slang,' but a nautical figure in keeping with the character, like 'Will bring fair weather yet' above, etc.

For the Scriptural allusions in the passage, see Psalms, xcv. 5, cxxxix. 9; Hebrews, vi. 19, and 1 Peter, v. 7.

PAGE 16. — *After a lingering, — ere she was aware, — etc.* — The reviewer in 'Blackwood' remarks: 'The "flitting" soul recalls to our mind Mr. Merivale's admirable translation of the dying emperor's address to his own. We may earn some reader's thanks by quoting it here: —

> Animula, vagula, blandula,
> Hospes comesque corporis,
> Quae nunc abibis in loca —
> Pallidula, rigida, nudula —
> Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos?

> Soul of mine, pretty one, flitting one,
> Guest and partner of my clay,
> Whither wilt thou hie away —
> Pallid one, rigid one, naked one —
> Never to play again, never to play?'

The 'Quarterly' reviewer says of the same passage: 'Wonderful as are many of Mr. Tennyson's descriptive rhythms, perhaps none have shown such marvellous and subtle skill as these three lines, which, catching the reader "ere he is aware" by their quickened flight and the sudden hurry of their cadence, leave him with parted lips.'

PAGE 19. — *From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.* — The verb is aptly chosen to express the sound of the mill.

PAGE 27. — *Then desperately seized the holy Book, etc.* — A favourite mode of divination among the ancients was that of *stichomancy*, or by lines of poetry. A number of verses were selected from a poet, mixed together in an urn, and one drawn out at random from which the good or evil fortune was inferred. The 'Æneid' of Virgil came to be especially used for this purpose, and hence the name *Sortes Virgilianæ* subsequently given to the method. After the introduction of Christianity the Bible was used in a similar way, the book being

opened at random, as here by Annie, and the first passage touched by the finger or catching the eye being taken as the response of the oracle. The custom was in vogue among the Puritans, and still lingers among the common people in England and Scotland.

Under the palm-tree. — The first edition had 'Under a palm-tree.' See Judges, iv. 5. 'She beholds Enoch seated "Under a palm-tree, over him the sun;" as he doubtless was at that moment in the island on which he had been wrecked, and where the ghostly echo of her wedding-bells is so soon to torment his ear. But the true vision is but a lying dream to his wife. In her simplicity she cannot think of palms as real trees growing in foreign lands. Her mind flies to Scriptural associations, . . . and the last obstacle to her marriage with Philip is removed' ('Blackwood').

PAGE 28. — *Prosperously sail'd, etc.* — The ten lines that follow are noteworthy as a word-picture of the vicissitudes of the voyage — the rough seas of the Bay of Biscay, the smooth sailing before the tropical trade-winds on either side of the African continent, and the variable weather about the Cape of Good Hope. The description of the 'home-voyage' just below is no less admirable. Tennyson excels in his sea-pictures.

PAGE 32. — *Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears, etc.* — 'How well is the unity of interest kept up by this simple infusion of a supernatural sympathy — a sympathy used by other imaginative writers with similar success, as by Hawthorne in "Transformation" [the infelicitous name under which 'The Marble Faun' is published in England] and by Miss Brontë in "Jane Eyre"' ('Quarterly Review'). Compare 'Aylmer's Field': —

> Star to star vibrates light: may soul to soul
> Strike thro' a finer element of her own?

PAGE 34. — *Muttering and mumbling, etc.* — The 'Quarterly Review' says here: 'Arden, all due allowance made, must have passed at least full seven years of solitary life upon his

isle; and it is a serious question whether any human being, much more a man of his intensity of nature, could have passed through this ordeal and kept his wits. The awful consequences of much shorter periods of utter solitude are well known, although we admit, on the other hand, that in the present state of psychology it is difficult to pronounce either way with certainty. We have little science to guide us, but against the imaginative insight of Mr. Tennyson we have the declaration of Wordsworth ("Excursion," book iv.) that

> the innocent sufferer often sees
> Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
> To realize the vision, with intense
> And over-constant yearning; there — there lies
> The excess by which the balance is destroyed.'

But Wordsworth is not really 'against' Tennyson, for he only says that the sufferer 'often' becomes insane — which is unquestionably true; and, as the reviewer himself admits, even scientific men do not settle the question either way. The poet may therefore claim the benefit of the doubt in Enoch's case.

Although the poor fellow has not lost his wits, he has lost the power of speech, and recovers it only by degrees. Tennyson's 'imaginative insight' is doubtless true to nature in this, and we are willing to believe it so in the rest.

To where the rivulets of sweet water ran. — That is, fresh water; like the 'dulces aquae' of Virgil ('Æneid,' i. 167). Compare page 42 below: 'Like fountains of sweet water in the sea.'

PAGE 35. — *Of England, blown across her ghostly wall.* — The chalk cliffs of the southern coast.

Either haven. — The one where he landed, and that in which his native village lay. Compare page 8 above.

PAGE 37. — *Repeated muttering, 'cast away and lost.'* — 'We may briefly record our admiration for the sustained power and absence of maudlin sensibility with which the last scenes of "Enoch Arden" are put before us. They are very pathetic; and they are never foolishly sentimental. The way in which

Enoch is stunned by the news of his wife's second marriage; his longing to see her, and assure himself that she is happy; the picture of peace and comfort *within* Philip's house, which throws into stronger relief the anguish of the wretched husband and father as he stands *without;* Enoch's grand (if not strictly just) self-sacrifice, as, recovering from the shock of *seeing* what only to *hear* of had been woe sufficient, he repeats his resolution to himself. "Not to tell *her*, never to let her know:" all these things in the hands of a French writer, aiming at the *déchirant* and the *larmoyant*, would have been morbidly painful. Mr. Tennyson so tells them that they elevate our minds by the sight of a spirit refining to its highest perfection in the purgatorial fires of earth' ('Blackwood').

PAGE 45. — *See your bairns before you go.* — The word *bairns* is used in the dialects of the North of England as well as in Scotland. Harrison, in his 'Description of England' (1577), says: 'The common sort doo call their male children *barnes* here in England, especiallie in the North countrie, where that word is still accustomablie in use.'

Woman, disturb me not, etc. — 'The dying man's last victory over selfishness (when, forbidding the woman to fetch his children, he sends to them and to his wife the loving messages which it might grieve them too much to hear from his own lips) bespeaks not merely our pity for him, but our reverence. There is also something profoundly sad in the way in which that desolate heart, after half-claiming back the living children, feels that, in real fact, only the dead little one is left it' ('Blackwood').

PAGE 46. — *There came so loud a calling of the sea, etc.* — In the English illustrated edition there is here a cut, from a drawing by Arthur Hughes, representing a stormy sea dashing against the wharves of the port. This cut was reproduced in my annotated edition of 'Enoch Arden and Other Poems' (Boston, 1887). Lord Tennyson afterwards wrote to me: 'The illustration of the "calling of the sea," by Arthur Hughes, is wrong. The "calling of the sea" is an expression for the sound of a ground swell, not of a storm. The timber of old houses would never have rung to such a sound except upon a

still night when the calling of the sea is often heard for miles inland.'

PAGE 47. — *And so fell back, and spoke no more.* — And here the critic of 'Blackwood,' like others of his class, thinks that the poem should have ended: 'What need to *tell* us that the noble fisherman was strong and heroic, when the poet has just completed his fine delineation of his strength and heroism? . . . The costly funeral sounds an impertinent intrusion. We cannot doubt for a moment that Philip gave honourable burial to the man whom he had so deeply, though so unwittingly, wronged. But the atonement is such a poor one that it looks like a mockery; and we would rather hear nothing of it. Why disturb in our minds the image which what went before had left there? — the humble bed on which the form, so often tempest-tossed, reposes in its last sleep; the white face, serene in death, waiting for the kisses which it might not receive in life.'

The poet may, however, have felt that such an ending, though perhaps more rhetorically effective, was less in keeping with the simplicity of the narrative. This ends, as it began, like a plain story of humble village life; and the costly funeral — something more than mere 'honourable burial,' a loving tribute to the sailor hero rather than a poor attempt at 'atonement' for the wrong he had suffered — is, after all, if we let our imaginations fill out the picture of which the poet gives this single hint, a most touching and most appropriate conclusion.

To the critical comments on the poem already cited, I may add that of Mr. E. C. Stedman, in his 'Victorian Poets' (p. 181): '"Enoch Arden," in sustained beauty, bears a relation to his shorter pastorals similar to that existing between the epic and his minor heroic-verse. Coming within the average range of emotions, it has been very widely read. This poem is in its author's purest idyllic style; noticeable for evenness of tone, clearness of diction, successful description of coast and ocean, — finally, for the loveliness and fidelity of its *genre* scenes. In study of a class below him, hearts "centred in the sphere of common duties," the Laureate is unsurpassed.'

Nor can we refrain from quoting one more tribute to the

poem, — that of Mr. George William Curtis in the 'Easy Chair' of 'Harper's Magazine' for October, 1864 (vol. xxix. p. 676): 'The fascinating fancy which Hawthorne elaborated under the title "Wakefield," of a man withdrawing from his home and severing himself for many years from his family, yet stealing to the windows in the darkness to see wife and children, and the changes time works in his familiar circle, is reproduced in "Enoch Arden," except that the separation is involuntary, and the unbetrayed looking in upon the change of years is not a mere psychological diversion, but an act of the highest moral heroism. Indeed, the tale is profoundly tragical, and like the last Idyl of the King, is a rare tribute to the master passion of the human heart. It is not the most subtle selfishness, whispers the poet; it is the perfection of self-denial. Xavier de Maistre says that the Fornarina loved her love more than her lover. Not so would Raphael's Madonna have loved. Not so loved Enoch Arden. There is no nobler tale of true love than his.

'It is told with that consummate elegance in which Tennyson has no peer. The English language has a burnished beauty in his use of it which is marvellous. In his earlier verses it was too dainty, too conspicuously fastidious, and the words were chosen too much for themselves and their special suggestions and individual melody. But his mastery of them now is manly. It is as striking as Milton's, although entirely different. There are a Miltonic and a Tennysonian blank verse in English literature — is there any other? . . .

'This volume, with all the others of Tennyson, are an invaluable study to every literary aspirant and neophyte; for as his poems are the most striking illustrations of the fondness of the literary spirit of the age for the most gorgeous verbiage, so they are the most noble examples of a luxuriant tendency constantly restrained and tempered by the truest taste. He has gained severity and simplicity without losing richness, and force without losing fire. Literature is not the record of thought only — it is thought *and* the vehicle of thought. Gold is very precious; but gold carved by Benvenuto is priceless.'

THE BROOK.

This poem was first published with 'Maud' in 1855.

The brook has been identified by some of the critics with the one near Tennyson's birthplace in Somersby, but the two differ in some particulars. See Vol. I. p. 7.

PAGE 48. — *How money breeds.* — Compare 'The Merchant of Venice,' i. 3. 95: —

> *Antonio.* Was this inserted to make interest good?
> Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?
> *Shylock.* I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.

See also Bacon, 'Essay on Usury': 'That it is against nature for money to beget money.'

Or even the sweet, half-English Neilgherry air. — The cool and salubrious Neilgherry Hills in India, a favourite summer resort of the English residents.

PAGE 50. — *Willow-weed.* — The *Epilobium hirsutum* of Linnæus.

PAGE 53. — *Meadow-sweet.* — Also called 'meadow-wort,' the *Spiræa ulmaria* of the botanists.

PAGE 56. — *The dome of Brunelleschi.* — The Duomo, or Cathedral of Florence, the dome of which is the masterpiece of Brunelleschi.

PAGE 57. — *By the long wash of Australasian seas.* — The poet is said to have specially prided himself on the sustained rhythmical quality of this line, as well he might.

And breathes in April-autumns. — I find this reading first in the edition of 1890. All the earlier ones that I have seen have: 'And breathes in converse seasons.' The change was probably made to avoid the succession of *s's*. Compare Vol. IV. p. 333, note on p. 44.

AYLMER'S FIELD.

This poem was first published with 'Enoch Arden,' in 1864, but was less favourably received than the latter by the English critics, on account of what 'Blackwood' calls 'Tennyson's old

infelicity in dealing with the higher orders.' That reviewer also finds fault with the construction of the story: 'The incidents are somewhat trite, and its characters more than somewhat improbable. Its heroine is a model of every Christian virtue; yet she deceives her father, and carries on a clandestine correspondence with her lover. Her pastor is an excellent clergyman; yet when two of his parishioners seek the sanctuary for the first time after their daughter's death, he seizes the opportunity to preach publicly against them — an act surely unbefitting the pulpit of any period or of any country, but simply impossible in that of a decent rector in the decorous Church of England of the eighteenth century. . . . Averill's sermon doubtless contains what a man, situated as he was, could not help thinking; but no less certainly what a gentleman and a Christian would, when the mischief was done and the punishment had fallen, have scrupulously refrained from publicly expressing. Why pour the molten lead of those fierce denunciations into wounds yet deeper than his own? Why smite those afresh whom God had smitten so terribly already? The preacher, arising from his own desolate hearth, like a prophet of old, to denounce the crime which has laid it waste, is unquestionably a grandly tragic figure. But a deeper sense of the proprieties of character might have enabled its possessor to attain this fine effect without that perilous approach to the unreal and to the theatrical, by which, as it appears to us, it has been purchased in the present instance.'

The 'Quarterly Review' says of the poem: 'Full of wonderful beauty in places, and written throughout as Mr. Tennyson alone can write, we must, by the standard of his former work, pronounce it a comparative failure. The story does not bear the marks of such careful thought, in its design, nor in the grouping of its parts. After the simple and clear effect of "Enoch Arden," "Aylmer's Field" gives an uncertain impression, and wants a like repose. Nor is there the same continuous unfolding of probabilities in the action, nor the same pure and noble feeling in the persons. . . . Sir Aylmer Aylmer is drawn with no kindly insight; he is a stupid ruffian, and being so is no type of an English gentleman. His wife is a mere

shadow upon the page, and the author writes throughout more in the spirit of a radical pamphleteer than of the poet laureate.'

Peter Bayne, on the other hand, remarks: '"Aylmer's Field" seems to me the companion picture to "Locksley Hall." It is one of the most tragic of Tennyson's pieces — one of the saddest, sternest, and I might almost add mightiest, poems in the world. In "Locksley Hall" we see desecrated affection making two persons unhappy; in "Aylmer's Field" the blight is more deadly and more comprehensive. I know nothing of Tennyson's in which the moral earnestness is so prophet-like as in this great poem. With all the might of his genius in its maturity, he pours a molten torrent of indignation and of scorn upon that pride which is, perhaps, the central vice of England, that pride which displays itself in many ways — in pride of birth, in pride of gold, in pride of insular superiority, and which is always desolating and deadly. Pride, in this instance, trampling love under its feet, provides exquisite pain for all the chief personages in the poem, and obliterates two ancient families from the face of the earth. . . .

'In this poem Tennyson has reaped the highest honour man can attain, namely, that of adding to the Scripture of his country; nor should I think it a much less dark or pernicious error than the pride which caused all this woe, to hold that the Almighty could speak only through or to Jewish seers, and that there is no true inspiration in such writing as this.'

The fact (see page 292 above) that the story of the poem is true is a sufficient reply to the criticisms of 'Blackwood' and the 'Quarterly' upon what seems 'improbable' in it.

PAGE 60. — *Dust are our frames, etc.* — 'Briefly, in stern, compact enunciation, the moral thesis or text of the poem is stated in the opening lines' (Bayne).

Like that long-buried body, etc. — Tennyson undoubtedly refers to the opening of an Etruscan tomb at the ancient city of Tarquinii, near Corneto, in Italy. The discovery was made by Carlo Avvolta, a native of Corneto, and was the first that directed the attention of archæologists to this interesting necropolis, in which more than two thousand sepulchres have

since been explored. While digging into a tumulus for stones to mend a road, Signor Avvolta broke into the tomb of an Etruscan Lucumo, or prince. 'I beheld,' he says, 'a warrior stretched on a couch of rock, and in a few minutes I saw him vanish, as it were, under my eyes, for as the atmosphere entered the sepulchre, the armor, thoroughly oxidised, crumbled away into most minute particles; so that in a short time scarcely a vestige of what I had seen was left on the couch.' The golden crown worn by the dead prince was so fragile that all but a small portion of it crumbled into dust on its way to Rome.

The simile is singularly apt and impressive here.

Slipt into ashes. — A good illustration of the poet's felicity in the choice of words.

And been himself a part of what he told. — A reminiscence of Æneas's 'quorum pars magna fui' ('Æneid,' ii. 6).

That almighty man, etc. — The 'Quarterly' critic is troubled by this, and asks: 'Now what do we gain by this profanation of words which immemorial usage has consecrated to one purpose only? They overweight by their exaggeration the satire they were designed to point.'

PAGE 61. — *Whose blazing wyvern, etc.* — The heraldic dragon-like creature so called, — evidently a prominent figure in the Aylmer arms.

PAGE 62. — *An immemorial intimacy.* — The phrase is repeated on page 66 below.

Sons of men, etc. — See Genesis, vi. 2.

Not proven. — A Scottish law phrase. *Proven* is an illegitimate form (as *approven* — which Tennyson has once in the 'Idylls of the King' — or *reproven* would be), but is now often used instead of *proved*.

PAGE 63. — *That islet in the chestnut-bloom.* — That spot of red.

Shone like a mystic star, etc. — A 'variable star,' like Algol in the constellation Perseus.

PAGE 64. — *A decad.* — The spelling *decade* is more common in America, though the analogy of *triad*, *pentad*, etc. favours the other.

The fairy footings on the grass. — The 'fairy rings,' or circles on the grass, supposed to be made by the elves in their nightly dances. Compare 'The Tempest,' v. 1. 36: —

> You demi-puppets that
> By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
> Whereof the ewe not bites, etc.

The petty mare's-tail forest. — The *Hippuris vulgaris*, a plant native to Britain, but found in other temperate and cold regions.

Or from the tiny pitted target blew, etc. — Referring to the dandelion. Compare 'The Poet': 'the arrow-seeds of the field-flower;' and 'Gareth and Lynette': —

> The flower
> That blows a globe of after arrowlets.

The music of the moon. — The reviewer in 'Blackwood' says, somewhat hypercritically: 'We do not think such an equivocal expression as "the music of the moon," so inevitably suggesting the "music of the spheres," should have been employed to designate that with which Philomel salutes the goddess of the night.'

PAGE 65. — *Temple-eaten terms.* — Terms spent as a law-student at the Temple in London.

The tented winter-field, etc. — The hop-field as it looks in winter, when the poles are put together in tent-like stacks. The military figure is well carried out in the description of summer, when the poles are set up again to support the vines that will cover them with garlands of ripened cones in autumn.

And mighty courteous in the main. — In the use of 'mighty' there is something approaching to a play upon the word.

PAGE 66. — *Nor by plight or broken ring, etc.* — Lovers used sometimes to break a ring in two, each keeping one of the pieces in token of betrothal.

PAGE 67. — *By sallowy rims.* — Its banks bordered with sallows, or willows.

One that, summer-blanch'd, etc. — One whose walls were in summer all white with the profuse blossoms of the 'traveller's

joy' (*Clematis vitalba*), and in autumn covered partly with its feathery and silky tufts, partly with ivy. Compare 'The Golden Year': 'O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis.'

A milky-way on earth. — A path white with borders of lilies. Compare Wordsworth, 'The Daffodils': —

> Continuous as the stars that shine
> And twinkle on the milky way,
> They stretch'd in never-ending line.

Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens. — The allusion is to Swedenborg.

PAGE 68. — *For she, etc.* — The verb is eleven lines below: 'was adored.'

Not sowing hedgerow texts, etc. — Not merely scattering tracts among the peasantry.

PAGE 69. — *With half a score of swarthy faces.* — His Indian servants.

The close ecliptic. — The tropical sun.

Unawares they flitted off. — That is, her thoughts wandered off.

PAGE 70. — *Gold that branch'd itself, etc.* — An apt description of the exquisite Indian work in metal.

PAGE 71. — *The costly Sahib.* — The critic in 'Blackwood' says: 'We must own we are much puzzled to understand in what sense the Indian kinsman who presents Edith with the fatal dagger is called "the *costly* Sahib." A man who made such handsome gifts to his relatives was anything but costly to them; and large as may have been his pension, we cannot think the poet meant to allude to it as a burden on the East Indian Company.' We wonder that the reviewer was not equally troubled by the *wealthy scabbard* three lines below, and that he did not suggest transposing the adjectives, like his brother Scotchman who was inclined to believe that Shakespeare really wrote in 'As You Like It': —

> Stones in the running brooks,
> Sermons in books, etc.

What would the prosaic reviewer make of the similar use of *costly* in 'The Merchant of Venice,' ii. 9. 94?

> A day in April never came so sweet
> To show how costly summer was at hand, etc.

PAGE 72. — *Blues and reds.* — The colours of rival political parties, like Whigs and Tories.

That great pock-pitten fellow. — Some poacher for whom they had been on the watch.

This blacksmith border-marriage. — A 'Gretna Green marriage.' This Scotch village was the first convenient halting-place for runaway couples from England, who could be married here without the publication of bans and certain other formalities prescribed by the English law, nothing being required in Scotland but a mutual declaration of marriage in presence of witnesses, — a ceremony which could be performed instantly, even in the case of minors. For some years a *blacksmith* was the person who officiated at these extempore marriages. Owing to changes in both the English and the Scotch laws, Gretna Green is no longer famous for such matches.

That cursed France, with her egalities! — It will be remembered that the time of the poem is supposed to be 1793.

PAGE 73. — *And Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.* — Acting on the neighbour's hint, though too haughty to let him know it.

Pale as the Jephtha's daughter. — A prophetic picture here.

PAGE 75. — *As the wind-hover hangs in balance.* — A species of hawk (*Falco tinnunculus*), so called from its hovering in the wind, or 'hanging in balance.'

PAGE 79. — *His richest bee's-wing from a bin reserved.* — His oldest and choicest port. The 'bee's-wing' is a peculiar film in this wine, so called from its resemblance to the wing of a bee. It is much esteemed by connoisseurs as a mark of age. 'The waning red' in the next line is an allusion to the gradual change from red to a permanent brown which takes place in port wine.

PAGE 80. — *The rain of heaven, and their own bitter tears, etc.* — The complimentary 'pretty' of 'Blackwood' is 'faint praise for this fine passage.

PAGE 81. — *The lawless science of our law, etc.* — The labyrinthic complexity of English law is aptly described in these lines.

PAGE 82. — *The gardens of that rival rose, etc.* — The Temple Gardens in London, where Plantagenet plucked the white rose and Somerset the red. Compare '1 Henry VI.' ii. 4.

Ran a Malayan amuck against the times. — Made a furious and indiscriminate attack, like those Malays who sometimes rush out in a frantic state with dagger in hand, yelling 'Amuck! amuck!' and attacking all who come in their way. We often meet with the incorrect expression 'run a muck;' and the first reading of the text here was 'a Malayan muck.'

PAGE 83. — *The nightly wirer of their innocent hare.* — A poacher, using snares of wire to entrap the hares.

PAGE 84. — *The brand of John.* — That is, a mark burnt into the bark of the tree in the reign of King John, covered from view by bark growing for centuries, but never adhering to the part branded, and finally disclosed by the falling-off of this outer growth. Major Rooke (quoted in 'Notes and Queries' for Sept. 25, 1880) tells us that 'in cutting down some timber in Birkland and Billagh, in Sherwood Forest, letters have been found cut or stamped in the body of the trees, denoting the King's reign in which they were so marked. The ciphers were of the reigns of James I., of William and Mary, and one of King John. The mark of John was eighteen inches within the tree, and something more than a foot from the centre; it was cut down in 1791.' Several other instances of trees bearing 'the brand of John' are cited by correspondents of the same journal.

Burst his own wyvern on the seal. — The seal bore the Aylmer arms. See page 303 above.

PAGE 85. — *The black republic on his elms.* — The flock of rooks. Compare 'Locksley Hall': 'the clanging rookery.'

Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue. — The 'frothfly' (*Aphrophora spumaria*) is also known as the 'froth-insect,' 'froth-worm,' 'froghopper,' etc. 'Fescue' is the name of many kinds of grass, belonging to the genus *Festuca*.

Babyisms. — Lovers' baby-talk; a word dating back only to 1836, according to the 'New English Dictionary.' The 'Blackwood' critic doubts whether the description is true to the time. He says: 'In the last century letter-writing was a stately, grave, and formal thing, even amongst near relations. And we have no doubt that a gentleman of ancient family like Leolin, and the heiress of the good-breeding, though not of the pride, of the Aylmers, could write to one another without forgetting the established proprieties of their day.'

PAGE 186. — *A Martin's summer.* — The mild weather coming near Martinmas, or St. Martin's Day, the 11th of November, corresponding to the 'Indian Summer' of New England. Compare '1 Henry VI.' i. 2, 131: 'Expect Saint Martin's summer, halcyon days,' etc.

PAGE 87. — *Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or men, etc.* — 'The simile is at once new and appropriate, and the divine beauty of the exception stands out in stronger relief from the dark background' ('Blackwood.').

Star to star vibrates light, etc. — Compare the illustrations of the same mysterious sympathy of souls widely sundered in 'Enoch Arden.' See page 295 above.

PAGE 88. — *With a weird bright eye, etc.* — The line should be scanned thus: 'With a weird | bright eye | sweating | and trem- | ble-ing;' making 'trembling' a trisyllable, as many similar words are lengthened in Elizabethan poets. Compare Shakespeare, 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' i. 3. 84: 'O, how this spring of love *resembleth;*' 'Coriolanus,' i. 1. 159: 'You, the great toe of this *assembly,*' etc.

PAGE 89. — *Their own gray tower, or plain-faced tabernacle.* — The neighbouring church (of England) or chapel (of Dissenters). The people from the former, supposed to be of the better class, are 'all in mourning;' while the humbler folk from the latter can afford only some bit of black as a badge of sorrow.

PAGE 90. — *The verse, 'Behold,' etc.*— See Matthew, xxiii. 38, or Luke, xiii. 35.

Gash thyself, priest, and honour thy brute Baal. — Compare 1 Kings, xviii. 28.

PAGE 91. — *The babe shall lead the lion.* — Compare Isaiah, xi. 6; and for the next line, Isaiah, xxxv. 1.

No coarse and blockish god of acreage. — The Roman god Terminus, who presided over the boundaries of private property (Lord Tennyson).

Leave all and follow me. — See Luke, xviii. 22.

PAGE 92. — *Wonderful, Prince of Peace, etc.* — See Isaiah, ix. 6.

Not passing through the fire, etc. — As in the worship of Moloch. Compare Leviticus, xviii. 21, 2 Kings, xxiii. 10, Jeremiah, xxxii. 35, etc.

Fairer than Rachel, etc. — See Ruth, ii. 2.

The angel that said 'Hail!' — See Luke, i. 28.

PAGE 93. — *The hand that robed your cottage-walls with flowers.* — See page 67 above.

PAGE 94. — *Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee.* — See Matthew, viii. 26.

May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt. — Alluding to his brother's suicide, which he suggests may have been in a moment of frenzy, and therefore without the guilt of deliberate self-murder.

PAGE 95. — *That knit themselves for summer-shadow.* — That contract the brow instinctively in the glare of sunshine.

Anger-charm'd from sorrow. — His wrath overpowering his grief, as if by a magic spell.

O thou that stonest, etc. — See Matthew, xxiii. 37.

PAGE 96. — *Or in the waste, 'Repent.'* — Like John the Baptist in the wilderness. See Matthew, iii. 1, 2; and for what precedes, Daniel, iv. 25, v. 26, etc.

Sent like the twelve-divided concubine, etc. — See Judges, xix. 29.

Out yonder. — That is, in France. See page 306 above, note on page 72.

PAGE 97. — *May Pharaoh's darkness, etc.* — See Exodus, x. 21, and Matthew, xxvii. 45.

PAGE 100. — *Yet to the lychgate, etc.* — A churchyard gate with a porch under which a bier was formerly placed while the introductory part of the burial-service was read. It is also called a *corpse-gate*, which means the same, *lich* (Anglo-Saxon *lic*) being an old word for a dead body. These gates are still to be seen in some parts of England.

The dark retinue reverencing death. — 'Retinue' is accented on the second syllable, as in 'The Princess,' iii.: 'Went forth in long retinue following up;' and 'Guinevere': 'Of his and her retinue moving they.' This is the accent of Shakespeare and Milton, in the only instances in which they use the word in verse.

PAGE 101. — *The hawk's cast.* — Indigestible matter ejected from the stomach by the hawk or other bird of prey.

The rabbit fondles his own harmless face. — As the timid creature does this only when absolutely at ease, nothing could better indicate the complete desolation of the scene; but all the details of the picture are in keeping.

A correspondent of 'Notes and Queries' says that the scene of 'Aylmer's Field' is 'Aylmerston in Norfolk.' I presume he refers to *Aylmerton*, a parish twenty miles north of Norwich, and about three miles from the coast. Rye's 'Guide to Norfolk' mentions it as 'interesting from the open pits or earth dwellings . . . which are locally called "shrieking pits," from the local belief that the wraith of a woman is always wandering about looking into them at night-time, wringing her hands and shrieking.'

SEA DREAMS.

This poem was first printed in 'Macmillan's Magazine' for January, 1860, and afterwards included in the 'Enoch Arden' volume of 1864.

'Poor Esther Johnson said of Swift that he could write beautifully on a broomstick; but even a broomstick, if one were permitted to wander in thought to the woods in which it grew, might seem a likelier subject for poetry than the pecuniary loss of a city clerk, on which Tennyson has contrived to hang a powerful and beautiful poem' (Bayne).

'The grace of the poem,' says the 'Quarterly Review,' 'is equalled by the winning kindliness of it.' Stedman calls it 'a poem of measureless satire and much idyllic beauty.'

PAGE 102. — *Her clear germander eye.* — 'Some might call this a touch of Pre-Raphaelite conceit or affectation, but I think a poet has a right to invent colour-words for himself when he wants them, provided only that they are expressive, picturesque, and not too far-fetched. There is no word in the language that will define the particular tint of blue which you see not unfrequently in the eye of an ailing child so well as that which is here applied by Tennyson. It is the faintly mottled blue of the germander speedwell (*Veronica chamædrys*) — nothing else. As the little flower can be seen in summer in every English lane, the reference to it can hardly be called far-fetched' (Bayne). I believe, however, that *germander* is here applied to the colour of the child's eye in health, not when 'ailing.'

Small were his gains. — The first reading was: 'His gains were small.'

PAGE 103. — *To buy strange shares.* — At first, 'wild shares.'

Variers from the church. — That is, Dissenters.

The Scarlet Woman. — The Church of Rome; his interpretation of Revelation, xvii. 3. For the 'Apocalyptic millstone,' see Revelation, xviii. 21.

They came and paced the shore. — At first, 'moved and paced the shore.'

The large air. — Compare Virgil, 'Æneid,' vi. 640: 'Largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit.'

PAGE 104. — *Till all the sails were darken'd in the east, etc.* — 'There is another reading, fresh and bright, from nature's own page! You stand by the sea, on a southward-looking coast, as the sun goes down. Westward, where the sails come between you and the sunset, they show simply as spots of shade; eastward, where they are farther from the sun than you, they catch the gleam from the west, and every sail is a speck of rose-light. I call that a proper illustration of our Alfred's "truth of *touch*"' (Bayne).

For 'Till all' the first reading was 'Until.'

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. — See Ephesians, iv. 26.

Remembering her dear Lord. — Originally, 'our dear Lord.'

PAGE 105. — *Is it so true that second thoughts are best?* — The first reading was: —

> It is not true that second thoughts are best,
> But first, and third, which are a riper first.

Tainsh considers the alteration an unfortunate one; but the interrogative form seems to me to add a bitter emphasis to the statement, not to weaken it by the expression of doubt, as he understands it.

When first I fronted him. — At first, 'I lighted on him.'

PAGE 106. — *Had you ill dreams?* — In the dream that follows, the results of speculation are contrasted with those of honest work.

PAGE 108. — *I thought I could have died to save it.* — This is true to the intensity of feeling we often experience in dreams.

PAGE 109. — *See Daniel seven and ten.* —At first, 'seven, the tenth.'

PAGE 110. — *And all things work together for the good, etc.* — See Romans, viii. 28.

PAGE 111. — *With all his conscience and one eye askew, etc.* — 'A masterly imitation of our Old English satiric style. I am not sure whether it was Dryden or Cowper that Tennyson had in mind, and I cannot help thinking that he must have been influenced, in composing the lines, by Crabbe. The first line will recall Dryden's "With two left legs and Judas-coloured hair"' (Bayne). The critic in 'Blackwood' says that the first two lines 'might be sworn to as Pope's any day.'

Made Him his catspaw, and the Cross his tool. — This line and the next were not in the first version.

PAGE 112. — *I loathe it: he had never kindly heart, etc.* — 'Her answer honours Tennyson, and is, by implication, one of the noblest tributes ever paid to the heart-wisdom of woman' (Bayne).

But round the North, etc. — The indirect quotation passes into direct on page 114: 'Then I fixt,' etc. The first reading here was: —

> Still
> It awed me. *Well — I dream'd that* round the North
> A light, a belt of luminous vapour, lay,
> And ever in it a low musical note
> Swell'd up and died; and, as it swell'd, a ridge
> Of breaker *came from out* the belt, and still
> Grew with the growing note, and when the note
> Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on *these* cliffs
> Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that
> *Which lived* within the belt) *by which* I saw, etc.

The 'Quarterly Review' remarks: 'If we have a fault to find, it is with the mother's dream. This dream is vague and something too ponderous for the piece. It labours under the double obscurity of being both dream and allegory, and it remains with us a doubt to this day whether we have hit upon the true meaning of it, or whether the poet will rise up in judgment against our interpretation. We had almost said with Bottom that it is "past the wit of man to say what dream it was." Not that this is all a fault, for, as the husband tells her, Boanerges the pulpiteer and the unfamiliar ocean roar were likely parents of such a fantasy.'

Bayne says that the dream 'seems to be an imaginative shadowing forth of the general revolutionary movement of those times, and of the battle of churches and sects, of creeds and scepticisms, through all which — an echo, shall we say? of the indestructible harmony in her own heart — she hears a note of Divine music. Readers will find much food for musing in these dreams.'

PAGE 113. — *And past into the belt, etc.* — The first reading was: —

> And past into the belt, and swell'd again
> *To music;* ever when it broke *I saw*
> The statues, *saint or king* or founder, *fall;*
> Then from *the gaps of ruin which it* left, etc.

And she grieved, etc. — Originally: —

And *I* grieved
In *my* strange dream, *I* knew not why, etc.

As their shrieks, etc. — At first, 'when their shrieks,' etc.

PAGE 114. — *While none mark'd it.* — Originally, 'tho' none mark'd it.'

To the waste deeps together, etc. — The first reading was: 'To the waste deeps together: and I fixt,' etc.

Our Boanerges with his threats of doom. — Compare Mark, iii. 17.

PAGE 115. — *But if there were, etc.* — Originally, 'But were there such,' etc.

The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow. — I did not understand this when editing the poem in 1887, and Lord Tennyson explained it in a letter thus: 'The reference is to a long dark-green seaweed, one of the *Laminaria*, called the "sea-furbelow," with dimpled, flounce-like edges. Boys sometimes running along the sand against the wind with this seaweed in their hands make it flap for sport. I should have put a note to this in my book. The name "sea-furbelow" is not generally known.' A similar seaweed is known on our New England coast as the 'Devil's apron-string.'

Why were you silent when I spoke to-night? — In place of this and the two next lines, the first version had the following: —

I would not tell you then to spoil your day,
But he at whom you rail so much is dead.

PAGE 117. — *This baby song.* — 'An exquisite lullaby, a song which all mothers may learn, for it is what household songs should be, tender, simple, graceful, and picturesque' ('Quarterly Review').

LUCRETIUS.

First published in 'Macmillan's Magazine' for May, 1868, and afterwards included in the 'Holy Grail' volume of 1869.

'The poem is Roman, not Greek, and it bears the impress of the Roman race. In Tennyson's Greek poems, the Greek's grave beauty shines through the modern thought, through the

modern description of Nature. Even in speeches like those of Athena and of Ulysses, beauty sits hand in hand with the experience of life. But in "Lucretius," stern, robust, rigid duty to self-chosen, self-approved law is first; the sense of the beautiful as a part of life does not appear in the poem. Lucretius has no religion save that of acceptance of Nature, but to that he is faithful. He has no duty to the gods, but he has duty to his own philosophic honour. He dies rather than be mastered by lustful visions which a Greek, even in the noble time when beauty meant pure harmony, would have gone through, smiled at, and forgotten.

'The philosophy also is a Greek philosophy, but Lucretius has made it Roman in temper; and one of the noble excellences of this poem is that Tennyson has never deviated in a single word from the Roman basis of the soul. Moreover, it takes a great poet to assimilate, as Tennyson does, the essence of Lucretius as a thinker and a poet in the space of about 300 lines; and to combine this with the representation of a man in an hour of doom and madness, such as an inferior poet, overloading it with frenzied ornament, would have made intemperate. Tennyson's masterly reticence, rigid restraint only to the absolutely necessary, are supreme in this poem' (Stopford Brooke).

The story on which the poem is founded, is taken from Jerome's additions to the 'Eusebian Chronicle,' under the year B. C. 94: 'Titus Lucretius poeta nascitur; postea amatorio poculo in furorem versus, cum aliquot libellos per intervalla insaniae conscripsisset, quos postea Cicero emendavit, propria se manu interfecit anno aetatis xliii.'

PAGE 119. — *Left by the Teacher, whom he held divine.*—Epicurus, who, according to Diogenes Laertius, wrote three hundred volumes.

PAGE 121. — *A void was made in Nature, etc.* — 'The possibility, or rather ultimate certainty, of this dissolution is repeated over and over again in Lucretius' (J. C. Collins).

Ruining along the illimitable inane. — Compare Milton, 'Paradise Lost,' vi. 867: —

Hell saw
Heaven ruining from Heaven.

On the lines that follow, compare Lucretius, ii. 999–1022, and v. 828–836.

But girls, Hetairai, etc. — That is, harlots (the Greek ἑταῖραι).

The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies. — Referring to Sulla in his latter years.

The quiet gods.— See page 124 below, and compare 'Œnone':

gods, who have attain'd
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, etc.

See also Vol. II. p. 323, note on p. 47.

PAGE 123. — *Thy Mavors.* — Mars.

The Trojan. — Anchises; as 'the wounded hunter' is Adonis, and the 'beardless apple-arbiter' (see 'Œnone') is Paris. 'The great Sicilian' is Theocritus.

PAGE 124. — *Kypris.* — The Greek Κύπρις, as Aphrodite (Venus) was called, from the island of Cyprus, her favourite seat.

The all-generating powers and genial heat, etc. — 'In these lines Tennyson has caught the one joyous note of Lucretius, his intense and keen delight in Nature, as rapturous as Shelley's' (Collins).

PAGE 125. — *My Memmius.* — Caius Memmius Gemellus, to whom Lucretius dedicated his 'De Rerum Natura.'

PAGE 126. — *Or lend an ear to Plato where he says, etc.* — The reference is to the 'Phædo,' vi.: ὡς ἔν τινι φρουρᾷ ἐσμὲν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ οὐ δεῖ δὴ ἑαυτὸν ἐκ ταύτης λύειν οὐδ' ἀποδιδράσκειν (we men are as it were on guard, and a man ought not to free himself from it, nor to run away). As Mr. Collins notes, Jowett takes φρουρά to mean a prison; but Tennyson's interpretation may be correct. Plato seems to be alluding to a saying of Pythagoras, to which Cicero refers ('De Senectute,' 73): 'Vetatque Pythagoras injussu imperatoris, id est Dei, de praesidio et statione vitae decedere.'

PAGE 127. — *How should the mind, except it loved them, clasp, etc.* — 'These lines contain, with the passage that follows, an allusion to the images or emanations which, according to Lucretius, matter is always throwing off' (Collins).

PAGE 128. — *But who was he that in the garden snared, etc.* — Compare Ovid, 'Fasti,' iii. 291–328, 'where Egeria instructs Numa to ensnare Picus and Faunus, that they may show him how the thunderbolts of Jupiter may be averted' (Collins).

PAGE 130. — *Not he, who bears one name with her, etc.* — That is, with *Lucretia.*

PAGE 132. — *Thus — thus: the soul flies out and dies in the air.* — The repetition of 'thus' marks the successive stabs of the dagger. Collins compares the 'Æneid,' iv. 660: 'Sic, sic, juvat ire sub umbras.'

'How the whole poem is wrought, how nobly the character of Lucretius emerges line after line, with what poetic strength and sculpturing power his masculine passion clears its way to death till the brief close shuts up the tragedy, is for every reader to grasp as he has capacity' (Stopford Brooke).

TO ALFRED TENNYSON.

This dedication, addressed to the eldest son (Alfred Browning Stanley Tennyson, born in 1878) of Lionel Tennyson, appeared in the 'Ballads and Other Poems,' 1880.

THE FIRST QUARREL.

First published in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

The poem is 'an idyll of the hearth inspired with life: Nelly and Harry are lifelike in the very respect in which Annie and Philip in "Enoch Arden" are idealized. They speak the rough, genuine language of the fisherfolk' (Waugh).

RIZPAH.

First printed in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

A reviewer in 'Macmillan's Magazine' for January, 1881, says of it: 'As the recital in lyric form of a weird tale of

misery and madness, this poem is unmatched in Mr. Tennyson's work. An old woman, in her fierce and at the same time trembling dotage, tells a lady who has come to visit her how her boy had long ago been hung in chains, under the old laws of England, for robbing the mail; how he had done it not in wickedness but in recklessness, but how her plea to that effect had availed him nothing; how, when she had gone to visit him in prison, she had been forced from him by the jailer, with his cry of "mother, mother!" ringing in her ears; how the same cry rang afterwards in her brain while she lay bound and beaten in a madhouse; and how, when she was at last set free, she used to steal out on stormy nights, and gather together his bones from beneath the gallows, until she had gathered them every one and buried them in consecrated ground beside the churchyard wall. It is as terrible a tale as could well be imagined, and is told with a plain and classic force, a freedom from shrillness or emphasis, which leaves the terror all the more piercing and unescapable.'

The 'Edinburgh Review' for October, 1881, refers to the poem as one in which Tennyson 'has broken on the world with a new strength and splendour,' and 'has achieved a new reputation.' The writer adds: 'Of this astonishing production it has been said that, were all the rest of the author's works destroyed, this alone would at once place him among the first of the world's poets. Such was the verdict pronounced by Mr. Swinburne. It has all his characteristic generosity, and not much of his characteristic exaggeration. . . . A work of this order can never be done justice to by quotations; but we have used them with no further end than to indicate baldly the outline of the poet's subject. For his sublime treatment of it, for the tenderness and the terror of his pathos, we must refer the reader to the poem itself in its entirety. Nothing in "Maud," nothing in "Guinevere," can approach in power to "Rizpah." This fact can, we conceive, be accounted for by the special nature of the subject. Of all the affections of human nature that are least subject to change, either in the way of contraction or development, is the passion of mother for child. It asks least aid either from faith or

reason. And something may be said of the three other poems that we have associated with "Rizpah" ['The First Quarrel,' 'The Northern Cobbler,' and 'The Village Wife']. These three deal all of them with the life of the common people, and touch our feelings and principles in their rudest and simplest form. They take us below the reach of either conscious faith or philosophy; and they elude, they do not meet, the problems of human destiny. Thus Mr. Tennyson's genius has escaped, in these cases, from the external circumstances that had been depressing it; and, once supplied with a fitting theme to handle, it has shown itself as strong, if not stronger than ever.'

For the suggestion of the title of 'Rizpah,' see 2 Samuel, xxi. 1–14.

PAGE 146. — *The creak of the chain.* — It was formerly the custom in England to hang the bodies of certain malefactors in chains after execution. The bodies of pirates were so hanged on the banks of the Thames.

PAGE 151. — *Flesh of my flesh.* — Compare Genesis, ii. 23.

They had moved in my side. — For the use of 'side,' compare Comus,' 1009: —

> And from her fair unspotted side
> Two blissful twins are to be born,
> Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

PAGE 152. — *Full of compassion, etc.* — See Psalms, lxxxvi. 15, cxi. 4, cxii. 4, and cxlv. 8.

And the first may be last, etc. — See Matthew, xix. 30, xx. 16, and Mark, x. 31.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

First printed in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

'The general lines of the Northern Cobbler's position are the same as of many reformed drinkers, but no one but himself could have set the bottle up in the window, or declared that he would take it with him after death, like a Norse warrior his sword, before the throne' (Stopford Brooke).

PAGE 155. — *The line.* — The equator.

PAGE 156. — *I could fettle and clump, etc.* — Repair and put new soles to old boots and shoes. Shakespeare uses 'fettle' once, in 'Romeo and Juliet,' iii. 5. 154: —

> But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
> To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church;

where it means to prepare, make ready.

PAGE 157. — *I slither'd.* — That is, slipped.

Slaäpe down i' the squad. — Suddenly down in the slush.

Scrawm'd and scratted. — Clawed and scratched.

PAGE 158. — *Weär'd it o' liquor.* — Spent it for liquor.

PAGE 160. — *All in a tew.* — All in a fluster.

PAGE 163. — *Snaggy.* — Snappish, ill-tempered.

PAGE 166. — *Feät.* — Trim; used by Shakespeare several times.

A codlin. — A codling, or unripe apple. Compare 'Twelfth Night,' i. 5. 167: 'a codling when 't is almost an apple.'

THE REVENGE.

First published in 'The Nineteenth Century' for March, 1878, with the title, 'Sir Richard Grenville, a Ballad of the Fleet;' afterwards included in the 'Ballads,' 1880, with the present title.

According to Sir Walter Raleigh, who wrote a 'Report of the truth of the fight about the Iles of Açores this last Sommer,' the engagement began at 3 P. M. on the 31st of August, Old Style, or the 10th of September, New Style, in the year 1591. Gervase Markham, who commemorated the event in a poem entitled 'The Most Honorable Tragedie of Sir Richard Grinuile, Knight' (1595), gives the main facts in his 'Argument,' or introduction, as follows: —

'Sir Richard *Grinuile*, lying at anchor neere vnto *Flores*, one of the westerlie Ilands of the *Azores*, the last of August in the after noone, had intelligence by one Captayne *Midleton* of the

aproch of the Spanish *Armada*, beeing in number fiftie three saile of great ships, and fifteene thousand men to man them. Sir *Richard*, staying to recouer his men which were vpon the Iland, and disdayning to flie from his Countries enemy, not beeing able to recouer the winde, was instantlie inuironed with that hudge Nauie, betweene whom began a dreadfull fight, continuing the space of fifteene howers, in which conflict, Sir *Richard* sunck the great *San Phillip* of *Spaine*, the *Ascention* of *Siuel*, the Admirall of the *Hulks*, and two other great *Armados;* about midnight Sir *Richard* receiued a wound through the bodie, and as he was dressing, was shot againe into the head, and his Surgion slaine. Sir *Richard* mayntained the fight, till he had not one corne of powder left, nor one whole pike, nor fortie lyuing men; which seeing, hee would haue sunke his owne ship, but that was gaine-stood by the Maister thereof, who contrarie to his will came to composition with the *Spanyards*, and so saued those which were left aliue. Sir *Richard* dyed aboard the Admyrall of *Spayne*, about the fourth day after the battaile, and was mightlie bewaild of all men.'

A Dutch writer, Jan Huygen van Linschoten, whose book was translated into English in 1598, gives the following account of Sir Richard's death: —

'All the rest of the Captaines and Gentlemen went to visite hym, and to comfort him in his hard fortune, wondring at his courage, and stout hart, for that he shewed not any signe of faintnes nor changing of colour. But feeling the hower of death to approch, hee spake these wordes in Spanish and said: Heere die I, *Richard Greenfield*, with a ioyfull and quiet mind, for that I haue ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, yat hath fought for his countrey, Queene, religion, and honor, whereby my soule most ioyfull departeth out of this bodie, and shall alwaies leaue behinde it an euerlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier that hath done his dutie, as he was bound to doe. When he had finished these or such other like words, hee gaue vp the ghost, with great and stout courage, and no man could perceiue any true signe of heauinesse in him.'

The battle has been well called 'the Balaklava charge of that Spanish War,' and 'a naval Thermopylæ.'

PAGE 171. — *Having that within her womb, etc.* — 'Womb' is here used in its original sense of belly. Compare Wiclif's Bible, Luke, xv. 16: 'And he coveitide to fille his wombe of the coddis that the hoggis eaten,' etc.

PAGE 176. — *And the little Revenge herself went down, etc.* — Markham, in a postscript to his poem, says: 'What became of the *Reuenge* after Sir *Richards* death, diuers report diuersly, but the most probable and sufficient proofe sayth, that within fewe dayes after the Knights death, there arose a great storme from the VVest and North-west, that all the Fleet was disperced, aswell the *Indian* Fleet, which were then come vnto them, as all the rest of the *Armada*, which attended their ariuall; of vvhich fourteene sayle, together with the *Reuenge*, and in her two hundred *Spanyards*, were cast away vppon the Ile of *S. Michaels;* so it pleased them to honour the bvriall of that renowned Ship the *Reuenge*, not suffering her to perrish alone, for the great honour shee atchiued in her life time.'

THE SISTERS

First printed in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

PAGE 181. — *Lake Llanberis.* — In North Wales. Compare 'The Golden Year': —

> And found him in Llanberis: then we crost
> Between the lakes, etc.

The lakes are Llyn Padarn and Llyn Peris; but they are often called the 'Llanberis Lakes.'

PAGE 183. — *Of our New Forest.* — An ancient royal hunting demesne, extending westward from Southampton Water. There are about 140 square miles in the district, little more than two thirds of which now belongs to the crown.

My Rosalind in this Arden. — The allusion to 'As You Like It' is obvious.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.

First printed in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

PAGE 198. — *The 'Ouse.* — That is, the poorhouse: a colloquial use of the word in England.

PAGE 200. — *Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un.* — For he called his horse Bellerophon. Similarly, the name of the warship Bellerophon is said to have been corrupted by the sailors into 'Billy-ruffian.'

PAGE 201. — *Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor owd Squire i' the wood.* — Howsoever (however) the mould (earth) rattled down on the poor old Squire's coffin.

PAGE 203. — *Hugger-mugger they lived.* — They lived in a slovenly way (Century Dict.). The word, whether as noun or adjective, often means in privacy or secrecy. Compare 'Hamlet,' iv. 5. 84: —

> and we have done but greenly,
> In hugger-mugger to inter him.

PAGE 204. — *Roomlin' by.* — Rumbling by (in his coach).

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

First published in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

The poem has been criticised as 'marred a little by the needlessly harsh attack on the practice of modern surgery, as exhibited by one of the hospital staff;' but Mr. Palgrave says: 'It should be remembered that this is a little drama, in which the Hospital Nurse, not the Poet, is supposed to be speaking throughout. The two children, whose story was published in a Parish Magazine, are the only characters here described from actual life.' He adds that 'this is the most absolutely pathetic poem' known to him.

PAGE 206. — *Drench'd with the hellish oorali.* — A drug, also known as 'woorali' and 'curari' (or 'curara'), extracted

from the *Strychnos toxifera*. It acts by paralysing the nerves of motion without impairing the sensibility. It is used by the South American Indians for poisoning their arrows. The reference here is to the practice of vivisection for purposes of physiological investigation. Tennyson evidently sympathised with the criticisms, not wholly groundless, which have been urged against it, and which have led in England to the enactment of laws restricting and regulating it.

PAGE 208. — *Spirits in prison.* — See 1 Peter, iii. 19.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

Contributed to 'The Nineteenth Century' for April, 1879, and afterwards included in the 'Ballads and Other Poems,' 1880. It is a dedication of the poem that follows, 'The Defence of Lucknow.'

The Princess Alice, Grand Duchess of Hesse-Darmstadt, died on the 14th of December, 1878, aged thirty-five years.

PAGE 212. — *Thy soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom, etc.* — Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, was married at Windsor, on the 13th of March, 1879, to Louise-Marguerite, Princess of Prussia.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

First printed in 'The Nineteenth Century' for April, 1879, and included in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

The events recorded in the poem occurred during the Sepoy Rebellion in British India, in 1857. 'Sir Henry Lawrence took charge of Lucknow as Resident in March of that year. The spread of rebellion in June confined him to the defence of the city, where he died of wounds on July 4. Brigadier Inglis, in succession, then defended Lucknow for twelve weeks until it was relieved on September 25 by General Havelock, to whom Sir James Outram (who accompanied as volunteer) had generously ceded the exploit' (Palgrave).

PAGE 215. — *The brute bullet.* — The senseless bullet; antithetical to the sentient 'brain.'

PAGE 216. — *Mine? yes, a mine!* — Sir James Outram, describing the siege, says: 'I am aware of no parallel to our series of mines in modern war. Twenty-one shafts, aggregating two hundred feet in depth, and 3291 feet of gallery have been executed. The enemy advanced twenty mines against the palaces and outposts; of these they exploded three which caused us loss of life, and two which did no injury; seven have been blown in; and out of seven others the enemy have been driven and their galleries taken possession of by our miners.'

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

First printed in the 'Ballads' volume, 1880.

Sir John Oldcastle, known in his time as 'the good Lord Cobham,' was born in the reign of Edward III., but in what year is unknown. He was an ardent Wiclifite, and took part in the presentation of a remonstrance to Parliament on the corruption of the church. In the reign of Henry V., he was accused of heresy and imprisoned in the Tower, whence he escaped and hid himself in Wales. A bill of attainder was passed against him, and a reward of a thousand marks offered for his capture. Four years later he was taken, and, being reckoned a traitor as well as a heretic, was hung up alive in chains, and burned to death by a fire kindled under the gallows.

PAGE 224. — *Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone.* — Like the carvings by prisoners of state still to be seen on the walls of the Beauchamp Tower.

PAGE 225. — *The proud Archbishop Arundel.* — Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, a zealous persecutor of the Lollards.

Bara. — Bread (Welsh).

Vailing a sudden eyelid. — The 'vailing' is the obsolete word meaning to lower or let fall. Compare Vol. VI. p. 291, note on p. 167.

Dim Saesneg. —No English; that is, I do not speak English.

Not least art thou, thou little Bethlehem, etc. — See Micah, v. 2.

Little Lutterworth. — Lutterworth in Leicestershire, the parish of which Wiclif was rector.

PAGE 226. — *Fulfilling Pentecost.* — See Acts, ii. 1–4.

Not peace, a sword, a fire.— See Matthew, x. 34.

PAGE 228. — *Sir Roger Acton.* — A prominent Lollard.

Beverley. — John of Beverley, who was martyred January 19, 1413–14.

They two witnesses. — See Revelation, xi. 3.

PAGE 229. — *Him, who should bear the sword, etc.* — Henry V. The poet seems here to identify the speaker with the Sir John Oldcastle who appears as one of Prince Henry's wild companions in the old play of 'The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth,' on which Shakespeare founded his 'Henry IV.' and 'Henry V.;' and it is well known that 'Sir John Oldcastle' was originally the name of Falstaff in the 'Henry IV.' plays. The dramatist changed the name to avoid offending the Protestants and gratifying the Roman Catholics. See the epilogue to '2 Henry IV.': 'Falstaff shall die of a sweat, unless already a' be killed with your hard opinions; for Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man.' Fuller, in his 'Church History' (lib. iv.), says: 'Stage poets have themselves been very bold with, and others very merry at, the memory of Sir John Oldcastle, whom they have fancied a boon companion, a jovial royster, and yet a coward to boot. . . . The best is, Sir John Falstaff hath relieved the memory of Sir John Oldcastle, and of late is substituted buffoon in his place.'

Or Amurath of the East. — A Turkish Sultan. Compare '2 Henry IV.' v. 2. 48: —

> This is the English, not the Turkish court;
> Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
> But Harry Harry.

The Saul that never will be Paul. — See Acts, ix. 4.

PAGE 230. — *A shame to speak of them.*— See Ephesians, v. 12.

The priest's pearl, flung down to swine. — See Matthew, vii. 6.

PAGE 231. — *He that thirsteth, etc.* — See Revelation, xxii. 17.

PAGE 233. — *Sylvester.* — Sylvester II., who became Pope A. D. 999.

Was like the son of God. — See Daniel, iii. 25.

COLUMBUS.

First published in the 'Ballads' volume, 1880.

PAGE 237. — *A new heaven, a new earth.* — See Revelation, xxi. 1.

The Dragon's Mouth. — The name (*Bocca del Drago*) which Columbus gave to a channel between the island of Trinidad and the mainland of South America.

The Mountain of the World. — Adam's Peak, in Ceylon, the highest (more than 7,000 feet) on the island. The native name was formerly Sumanokuta, or Mountain of the Gods. It is famous in Buddhistic legends.

PAGE 238. — *King David called the heavens a hide, a tent, etc.* — See Psalms, civ. 2.

Some cited old Lactantius. — An eminent Christian author, who flourished in the early part of the 4th century. The *editio princeps* of his works, one of the oldest of printed books, was brought out at Subiaco, in 1465.

PAGE 240. — *Guanahani.* — The native name of the first island discovered by Columbus.

Jasper, sapphire, etc. — See Revelation, xxi. 19–21.

The Lamb's own book of life. — See Revelation, xiii. 8, xxii. 27, etc.

Sunless and moonless. — See Revelation, xxi. 23.

PAGE 241. — *The belting wall of Cambalu, etc.* — The royal residence of the Khan of Cathay. Compare 'Paradise Lost,' xi. 388: 'Cambalu, seat of Cathayan Can.'

'Prester John' was a mythical Christian king of India. Compare 'Much Ado About Nothing,' ii. 1. 274: 'I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia, bring you the length of Prester John's foot;' and 'Hudibras':—

While like the mighty Prester John,
Whose person none dares look upon,
But is preserv'd in close disguise
From being made cheap to vulgar eyes.

PAGE 242. — *Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir.* — See 1 Kings, ix. 26–28.

Howl'd me from Hispaniola. — The name which Columbus gave to the island of Hayti.

Fonseca, my main enemy at their court. — Juan Rodriguez Fonseca, a bigoted Spanish prelate, who called Columbus a visionary, and treated him with persistent malignity.

They sent me out his tool, Bovadilla. — Francisco de Bobadilla, who was sent to look into the condition of the colony planted by Columbus, and who arrested the great navigator, and sent him in chains to Spain.

PAGE 243. — *Veragua.* — A province of New Granada, in South America.

O soul of little faith. — See Matthew, xiv. 31, Luke, xxiv. 25.

PAGE 246. — *By him, the Catalonian Minorite, etc.* — Bernardo Buil (Boyle), a Benedictine monk, according to the best authorities (not a 'Minorite,' or Franciscan), who was sent by the Pope to the new Indies, in June, 1493, as apostolical vicar. He hated Columbus, but there seems to be no evidence that he 'excommunicated' him.

Christopher Colon. — The Spanish form of the name 'Columbus.'

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

First published in the 'Ballads,' 1880.

The original story may be found in P. W. Joyce's 'Old Celtic Romances' (London, 1879).

According to the tale, Maildun (*Mail Duin*, chief of the fort) sets forth with sixty chosen men, to seek the murderer of his father. They come, as in the poem, to an island where the man lives, but are driven away by a tempest. After three days they arrive at 'the island of the monstrous ants,' each 'as large as a foal;' but, not liking the 'eager and hungry look'

of the insects, they do not land. Three days later they reach 'the terraced island of birds,' of which they take great numbers, and then sail away to a large sandy island, from whose shores they are frightened by a monster 'somewhat like a horse in shape,' but with legs like a dog and blue claws. On the next island they see a 'demon horse-race,' and continue their voyage to another, whereon is a magnificent palace. Here they find 'abundance of food and ale,' but see no inhabitants; so after eating and drinking their fill, they thank God and put to sea again. The 'island of the wonderful apple-tree,' a single apple from which serves to supply the travellers with food and drink for forty days, and successive islands infested with 'blood-thirsty quadrupeds,' strange monsters, and 'red-hot animals,' are visited in turn; also an island where a 'little cat,' living in a splendid palace, kills one of Maildun's brothers; another island that 'dyed white and black' — everything on one side of a wall across it becoming black, and on the other side white; the island 'of the burning river,' and that 'of the miller of hell,' who grinds up all the good things that men complain of, and all that they 'try to conceal from God;' with the isles of 'weeping,' of 'the four precious walls,' of 'the crystal bridge,' of 'speaking birds,' of 'the aged hermit,' and of 'the big blacksmiths,' who remind one of the Cyclops of old. The voyagers also sail over 'the crystal sea,' and another transparent sea beneath whose waters they see a country beautiful indeed, but infested with strange and monstrous animals. Later they come to another island, about which the sea rose up, forming, 'as it were, a wall all round it;' and to another spanned by a stream of water in the form of a rainbow, 'and they hooked down from it many large salmon.' A mighty 'silver pillar standing in the sea' and an 'island standing on one pillar' are other wonders they encounter before arriving at a lovely island, the queen of which detains them long by her magic arts. Escaping at last, they visit 'the isle of intoxicating wine-fruits' and that of 'the mystic lake,' whose waters renewed the youth of the bather, and a third where the people were 'all continually laughing.' They pass 'the isle of the blest' without venturing to land,

and soon see a lonely rock whereon a holy hermit dwelt, who, after telling the wonderful story of his life, said to them: 'You shall all reach your own country in safety; and you, Maildun, you shall find in an island on your way the very man that slew your father; but you are neither to kill him nor take revenge on him in any way. As God has delivered you from the many dangers you have passed through, though you were very guilty and well deserved death at His hands, so do you forgive your enemy the crime he committed against you.' Sailing away the voyagers come again to the island where this enemy dwelt. It is evening, and the man is at supper with his friends. Maildun and his companions stand outside the house and listen to the conversation going on within. The people happen to be talking of Maildun, and one asks, 'Supposing he came now, what should we do?' 'I can easily answer that,' said the man of the house; 'Maildun has been for a long time suffering great afflictions and hardships; and if he were to come now, though we were enemies once, I should certainly give him a welcome and a kind reception.' Maildun at once knocked at the door and made himself known. The wanderers were invited to enter, and 'were joyfully welcomed by the whole household; new garments were given to them; and they feasted and rested, till they forgot their weariness and their hardships.'

It will be seen that while the old Celtic tale has suggested to Tennyson a few of the main incidents in the poem, the details are almost entirely of his own invention. The date which he assigns to the legend (A. D. 700) is that which Joyce and others, from internal evidence, accept for the events on which it is founded; for they 'think it likely that Maildun did actually go on a voyage, which was afterwards made the framework round which some ingenious *ollave* [professional story-teller] wove his fanciful story of the hero's adventures.'

PAGE 251. — *Fainter than any flittermouse-shriek.* — The cry of the bat, which in England is popularly called 'flittermouse' (fluttering-mouse), 'flickermouse,' or 'flindermouse.' Compare Ben Jonson, 'Sad Shepherd,' ii. 8: 'And giddy flittermice, with leather wings,' etc.

They almost fell on each other. — This idea, which occurs so often in the poem, is not to be found in the old legend.

PAGE 253. — *The triumph of Finn.* — Finn, the son of Cumal, was the most renowned of all the heroes of ancient Ireland. He was commander of the Feni, or 'Feni of Erin,' a sort of standing army maintained by the monarch for the support of the throne. Each province had its own soldiers under a local captain, but all were under one commander-in-chief. Finn was equally brave and sagacious. His foresight was, indeed, so extraordinary that the people believed it to be a preternatural gift, and a legend was invented to account for it. He was killed at a place called Athbrea, on the Boyne, A. D. 284. Ossian, or Oisin, the famous hero-poet, to whom the bards attribute many poems still extant, was the son of Finn.

PAGE 254. — *The Isle of Fruits.* — The poet may have got the hint of this island from the 'isle of intoxicating wine-fruits' in the Celtic tale; but the rich details of the picture are all his own.

The poisonous pleasure of wine. — Compare Milton, 'Comus,' 47: 'The sweet poison of misused wine.'

PAGE 256. — *That undersea isle.* — The description here is developed from the simple statement in the old legend that 'they could see, beneath the clear water, a beautiful country, with many mansions surrounded by groves and woods.' So far from being tempted to dive down to the place, the sight of 'an animal fierce and terrible' which infests it makes them tremble lest they may 'not be able to cross the sea over the monster, on account of the extreme thinness of the water; but after much difficulty and danger they get across it safely.'

PAGE 258. — If I had not read the old tale, I should have said that this quaint and wild conception must have been taken from it; but, though it seems so thoroughly like a Celtic fancy, there is nothing in the legend that could have suggested it.

PAGE 259. — *Saint Brendan.* — One of the most famous of the ancient Celtic legends is that of 'The Voyage of Saint

Brendan,' undertaken in the sixth century. He set out from Kerry, sailed westward into the Atlantic, and, as some believed, landed on the shore of America. The adventures he met with were as varied and surprising as those of Maeldune.

DE PROFUNDIS.

First published in the 'Ballads' volume of 1880; but, according to Stopford Brooke, it was written on the birth of the poet's eldest son, Hallam (August 11, 1852), and is 'far the finest of his speculative poems. Its stately and majestic sublimity is warmed by the profound emotion of his fatherhood.'

PAGE 263. — *Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he will.*— Compare Genesis, i. 2.

PAGE 264. — *Let us make man.* — See Genesis, i. 26.

PREFATORY SONNET

TO 'THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

Contributed to the first number of 'The Nineteenth Century,' March, 1877, and afterwards included with the 'Ballads,' 1880. The review was edited by Mr. J. T. Knowles, the friend who made the plans for the poet's house at Aldworth.

PAGE 269. — *Their old craft, seaworthy still.* — 'The Contemporary Review.'

This roaring moon of daffodil. — Compare 'The Winter's Tale,' iv. 4. 118: —

> daffodils
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty.

See also Vol. III. p. 324, note on 'April daffodilly.'

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

First printed in Lord Lyttleton's Memoir prefixed to Brookfield's 'Sermons,' and afterwards included in the 'Ballads' volume, 1880.

Brookfield was at Trinity College with Tennyson. See Vol. I. p. 29.

PAGE 270. — *We paced that walk of limes.* — Compare 'In Memoriam,' lxxxvii. : —

> Up that long walk of limes I past
> To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Our kindlier, trustier Jaques. — The allusion to 'As You Like It' needs no explanation.

MONTENEGRO.

First printed in 'The Nineteenth Century,' March, 1877, and included in the 'Ballads' volume, 1880.

PAGE 271. — *Great Tsernogora!* — Or *Tzernagora*, the native name of Montenegro.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

Contributed to 'The Nineteenth Century' for June, 1877, and printed with the 'Ballads,' 1880.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

A translation from the Anglo-Saxon, first printed with the 'Ballads,' 1880.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

Contributed to 'The Nineteenth Century' for August, 1877, and printed with the 'Ballads,' 1880.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

Written on the marriage of Princess Frederica of Hanover to Baron Alphonse de Pawel-Rammingen at Windsor, April 24, 1880; and included in the 'Ballads' volume.

The Princess was the daughter of George V. of Hanover, who died June 12, 1878.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

Written in 1877, and printed in the 'Ballads' volume, 1880.

TO DANTE.

Written for the festival in honour of Dante, opened by the King of Italy on the 14th of May, 1865, the six hundredth anniversary of the birth of the poet; and printed in the 'Ballads' volume.

END OF VOL. VII.

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